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The Emergency Food Assistance System—Findings From the Client Survey

Final Report

By Ronette Briefel, Jonathan Jacobson, Nancy Clusen, Teresa Zavitsky, Miki Satake, Brittany Dawson, and Rhoda Cohen of Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

ERS project representative: Laura Tiehen

Abstract

During a typical month in 2001, food pantries served about 12.5 million people, and emergency kitchens served about 1.1 million people. Food pantries and emergency kitchens play an important role in feeding America's low-income and needy populations. These organizations are part of the Emergency Food Assistance System (EFAS), a network run largely by private organizations with some Federal support. This report presents findings from a national study of EFAS clients, which surveyed clients who received emergency food assistance from selected food pantries and emergency kitchens. The study finds that food pantries and emergency kitchens serve a diverse clientele, but that almost three-fourths of those served are food insecure. The majority of EFAS households receive Federal food assistance, including two-thirds of food pantry clients and 45 percent of emergency kitchen clients. However, a substantial number of EFAS households do not receive food stamps, though they appear to be eligible for them. For an executive summary of the full report, see *The Emergency Food Assistance System—Findings From the Client Survey: Executive Summary*.

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I. STUDY OVERVIEW

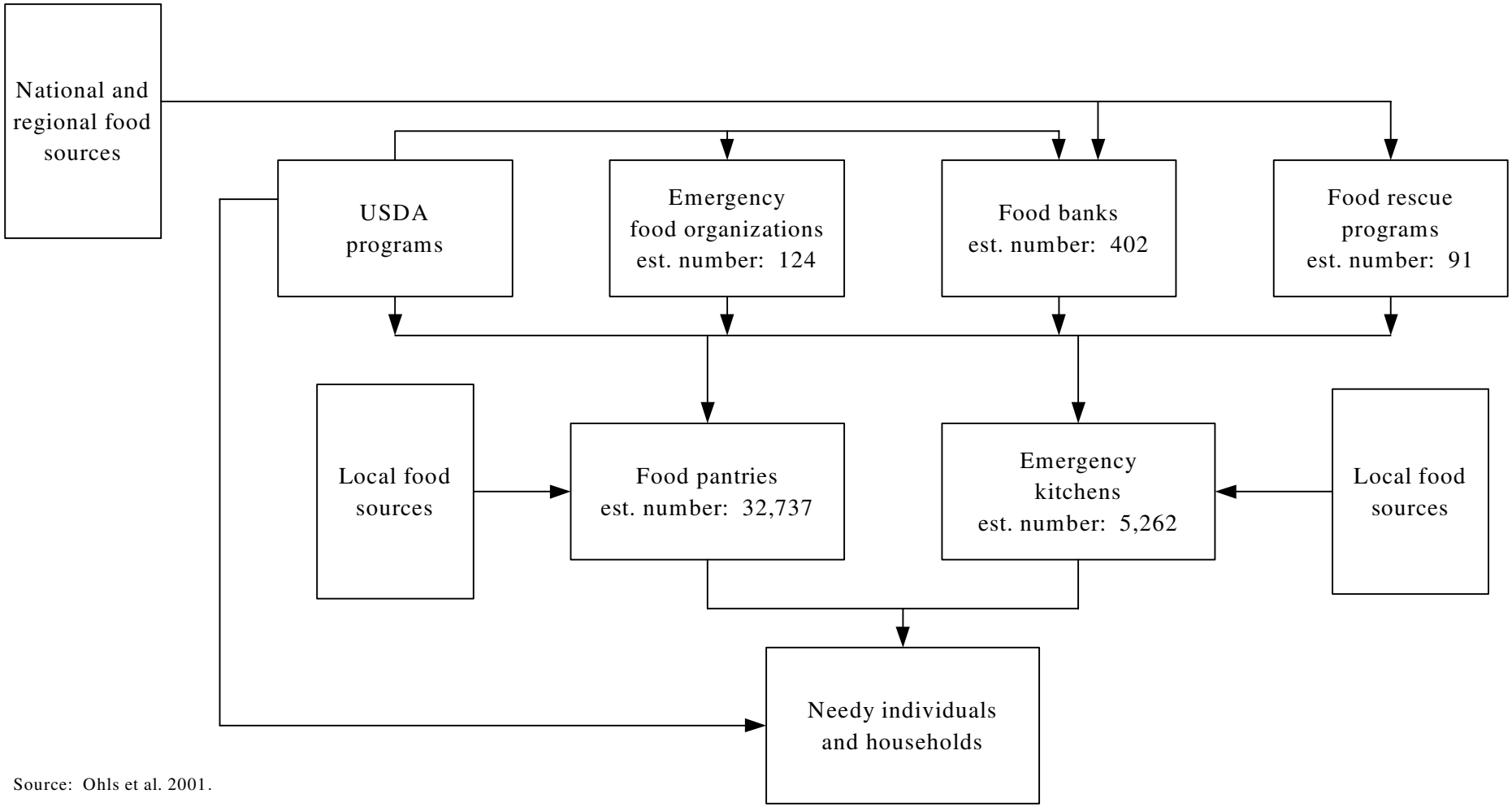
Emergency kitchens and food pantries play an important role in the nutrition "safety net" for America's low-income and needy populations. These organizations are part of the Emergency Food Assistance System (EFAS), a network of activities run largely by private organizations, but with some federal government support, to help meet the food needs of the low-income population. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Economic Research Service (ERS) has the responsibility to provide social and economic information on consumer, food marketing, and rural issues, including food security status of the poor; domestic food assistance programs; low-income assistance programs; and consumer demand for food quality, safety, and nutrition. To better understand how public and private food assistance are utilized by and affect the low-income population, ERS sponsored a national study of the EFAS. The study collected information from emergency food providers during 2000 (the EFAS Provider Survey), and from clients visiting emergency kitchens and food pantries during 2001 (the EFAS Client Survey). This report describes the findings from the client survey and thus complements the findings from the provider survey (Ohls et al. 2001).

A. BACKGROUND ON THE EFAS

Figure I.1 depicts the EFAS and the interrelationships between agencies directly serving people and those serving other providers. Emergency food providers include food banks, food rescue organizations, emergency food organizations (EFOs), kitchens, and food pantries. Food banks obtain food nationally and regionally and distribute it to individual providers. Food rescue organizations perform a similar role but focus on perishable food and food gleaning. EFOs focus their EFAS activities mainly on the distribution of commodities from The Emergency Food

FIGURE I.1

EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE SYTEM



Source: Ohls et al. 2001.

Note: Emergency shelters are also considered part of the Emergency Food Assistance System but were not included in the present study which focused on programs providing primarily food rather than shelter and food. Food sources include donated food from manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and growers; food purchased at market prices from those same sources; field-gleaning and other donation of unsalable food; leftover food from service organizations, such as restaurants and schools; community donations; State programs; and other sources. For purposes of this study, the term "emergency food organization" was limited to "wholesale" organizations that distributed government commodities primarily to emergency kitchens and pantries. In some States, the term is used more broadly to include organizations that distribute commodities directly to households.

Assistance Program (TEFAP) to other organizations such as emergency kitchens, food banks, and local charities.[1]

EFAS providers are primarily private, nonprofit organizations that distribute groceries (unprepared foods) and meals (prepared foods) on a short-term or emergency basis to needy individuals and households who lack the resources to meet their own food needs. EFAS clients include the homeless, the disabled, the elderly, the unemployed, the working poor, and victims of natural disasters.

1. Role of Food Pantries and Emergency Kitchens

Food pantries and emergency kitchens are important components of the EFAS because they serve as local providers and focus on providing assistance to needy, low-income households and individuals in their neighborhoods. Food pantries are distribution centers that provide groceries and other basic supplies that clients use in their homes or at other locations away from the distribution sites. Emergency kitchens supply meals or food for on-site consumption to people who do not live at the site. Pantries and kitchens can be co-located with other types of EFAS providers such as food banks, food rescue programs, or shelters. Emergency shelters were not included in the client survey, which focused on programs providing primarily food (rather than shelter *and* food or other services) to needy individuals and households.

[1]EFOs are designated by states as official distributors for USDA commodities received by the state. Some states define EFOs more broadly to include organizations distributing TEFAP commodities directly to individuals and families. The EFAS client survey defined EFOs as organizations that: (1) distributed government commodities to other EFAS organizations, primarily food pantries and emergency kitchens, rather than directly to individuals and families, (2) were designated by the state TEFAP director as an official distribution organization for TEFAP commodities, and (3) had a primary purpose other than emergency food distribution (Ohls et al. 2001). Organizations that distributed commodities directly to individuals and families were considered food pantries for the EFAS study.

2. Relationship of EFAS to Federal and Private Food Assistance Programs

USDA, through the Food and Nutrition Service, administers several food assistance programs that help low-income households obtain adequate and nutritious diets. The EFAS interacts closely with USDA food assistance programs by providing temporary or supplemental food assistance to many of the same needy populations the USDA programs serve. The largest USDA food assistance program, the Food Stamp Program (FSP), is designed to provide food assistance through normal channels of trade by providing low-income consumers with purchasing power to buy food at market prices from food retailers authorized to participate in the program. Other programs such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and TEFAP provide food assistance outside regular marketing channels. The NSLP and SBP provide cash subsidies and commodity assistance to schools to help provide low-cost or free lunches and breakfasts to low-income school children. Other federal programs that provide food or food vouchers include the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP), formerly the Nutrition Program for the Elderly.

The EFAS also serves as a distribution outlet for TEFAP, which distributes commodity foods to state and local agencies for distribution to low-income households for home consumption or to charitable organizations that provide meals for needy people ("The Emergency Food Assistance Program," www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap/tefaphome.htm," March 28, 2002). States set income requirements for TEFAP clients.

Private, nonprofit organizations provide emergency food assistance as well. Some of these groups are affiliated with national organizations, such as the United Way, Red Cross, or Salvation Army. Some are affiliated with faith-based organizations, such as Catholic Charities,

which might provide or target services to group members or which might be open to the general population. Others are independent.

3. Limitations of Previous Studies

Previous research on EFAS clients has been limited by several factors. First, little existing research is nationally representative. Even the broadest-based, most recent study of the EFAS, conducted for America's Second Harvest, does not cover the entire system, because sites were sampled for the study based on their affiliation with food banks in the Second Harvest network.[2] The widely cited report from the U.S. Conference of Mayors is based on surveys of city officials conducted in 27 cities (U.S. Conference of Mayors 2001). City officials were asked about changes in demand at emergency food providers and city services (for example, the provision of emergency shelter).

Second, much research has focused on specific groups, such as the homeless population, an important, but relatively small segment of those who need and use the EFAS (10 percent, according to America's Second Harvest (Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001). For instance, some EFAS user profiles developed on a national basis in 1988 apply only to the homeless population and do not support an assessment of the overall emergency food network or system (Burt and Cohen 1988; Cohen, Chapman and Burt 1990; Burt et al. 1999).

Third, existing studies vary according to the type of provider covered. Some studies have examined a specific program and its providers, making it difficult to place the results in the broader context of the EFAS as a whole [for example, the TEFAP study done by Quality Planning Corporation and Abel, Daft, and Earley in 1987 and the Prepared Meals Provision

[2]About 80 percent of all food banks are affiliated with America's Second Harvest (Ohls et al. 2001).

Study (Food and Nutrition Service 1989).][3] Others include both those providers whose primary mission is emergency food assistance and those whose primary mission is something else (such as providing shelter) (Burt et al. 1999).[4] The studies have produced diverse information from different perspectives about the EFAS, but they have not, in general, yielded detailed information about the clients of food pantries and emergency kitchens that can be generalized to the nation as a whole.

Finally, some of the research is dated, with information collected during the 1980s (Cohen, Chapman, and Burt 1990; Burt and Cohen 1988; Quality Planning Corporation and Abel, Daft and Earley 1987). Constantly changing economic and policy environments highlight the need for up-to-date information on the EFAS, using sound methods and representative samples to assess current policies and to plan future programs.

B. STUDY OBJECTIVES

Information about users of the entire emergency food assistance program addresses the limitations of previous research. The current study reflects conditions after the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA). PRWORA placed a 3-month time limit to receive food stamps on able-bodied adults without dependents unless they are working or in an approved job training program (or live in areas granted waivers due to insufficient jobs or high unemployment rates), and ended benefits for most legal

[3]The TEFAP study included interviews with EFO directors and managers of TEFAP distribution sites (Quality Planning Corporation and Abel, Daft, and Earley 1987). The Prepared Meals Provision Study included in-person interviews with homeless users and nonusers of prepared meals (Food and Nutrition Service 1989).

[4]The National Survey of Homeless Assistance and Providers and Clients included telephone and mailed surveys of administrators of homeless assistance programs and in-person interviews with clients of these programs (Burt et al. 1999).

immigrants.[5] In addition, PRWORA restructured the cash welfare system, which may have reduced participation in food assistance programs. The information from the client survey, combined with that from the provider survey, will inform public policy about the emergency food assistance system and be used to plan programs to address the food needs of the low-income population.

1. The EFAS Provider Survey

The EFAS Provider Survey, conducted for the ERS by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. (MPR) during 2000, included a national sample of EFAS providers. Data were collected and reported for food pantries, emergency kitchens, food banks, food rescue organizations and emergency food organizations. Key findings for food pantries and emergency kitchens are shown in Table I.1 (Ohls et al. 2001). About 32,700 food pantries, the largest component of the system, provide food for about 6 million meal equivalents per day, or 2.2 billion meal equivalents per year. About 5,300 emergency kitchens provide about 173 million meals per year. About two-thirds of both pantries and kitchens are affiliated with faith-based organizations.

[5]Benefits were later restored for immigrant children and elderly persons.

TABLE I.1

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE EFAS PROVIDER SURVEY

Characteristic	Food Pantries	Emergency Kitchens
Size and service	About 32,700 food pantries participate in the EFAS system, distributing an estimated 2.9 billion pounds of food per year, which translates to roughly 6 million meal equivalents per day, or 2.2 billion meal equivalents per year. About 43 percent of pantries limit households to receiving food once per month or less. About 30 percent of food pantries are located in nonmetropolitan areas.	About 5,300 kitchens participate in the EFAS system, providing more than 173 million meals per year. One-third of kitchens (33 percent) serve meals only one day per week. Emergency kitchens are disproportionately available in metropolitan areas; only 14 percent of kitchens are located in nonmetropolitan areas.
Affiliations	Sixty-seven percent of food pantries are faith-based organizations.	Sixty-five percent of emergency kitchens are faith-based organizations.
Ability to meet perceived needs	About 87 percent of pantries said they could deal with a 5 percent increase in the need for their services, and about one-third thought that they could deal effectively with as much as a 20 percent increase in need. During the 12 months before the provider survey, about 33 percent of pantries turned away people who requested services, mostly because the individuals in question were disruptive, had substance abuse problems, or failed to meet residency requirements or income guidelines. Most (84 percent) did not turn away people because of lack of food.	About 89 percent of kitchens said they could deal with a 5 percent increase in the need for their services, and about one-third thought that they could deal effectively with as much as a 20 percent increase in need. During the 12 months before the provider survey, about 25 percent of kitchens turned away people who requested services, mostly because the individuals in question were disruptive, had substance abuse problems, or failed to meet residency requirements or income guidelines. Most (84 percent) did not turn away people because of lack of food.

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Study Provider Survey (2000).

The provider survey found that EFAS might not always provide consistent coverage across different parts of the day or different days of the week. In addition, about one-fourth of both food pantries and emergency kitchens perceived that there are unmet needs for their services.

2. Research Objectives for the EFAS Client Survey

The EFAS Client Survey is the only available study that provides data for a nationally representative sample of clients who visit food pantries and emergency kitchens in the EFAS. The study has five primary objectives:

1. To characterize EFAS clients
2. To determine the frequency and duration of EFAS use and client satisfaction with services
3. To determine the precipitating events that lead clients to seek emergency food assistance
4. To determine EFAS clients' participation in federal food assistance and other benefits programs
5. To assess the food security of EFAS clients

The results from the study will inform policy decisions related to emergency food assistance. The client survey will help USDA understand the characteristics of EFAS clients, including their eligibility for and participation in federal nutrition assistance programs, employment status, household food security, and the ability of the EFAS to meet their needs. Further, the survey will assess the relationship of clients' food security to their utilization of public and private food assistance.

C. ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report contains five chapters. Chapter I provides an overview of the study, including a description of the EFAS and the study's research objectives. Chapter II describes the study

design, data collection methods, and data sources. Chapters III and IV provide the data and major findings for food pantry and emergency kitchen clients, respectively. Chapter V summarizes the key study findings and discusses policy implications. The appendices include specific details related to data collection methods, analytic methods, and the development of sample weights, and supplemental data tables.

II. METHODS

This chapter provides a general description of the study design and methods used to collect information from nationally representative samples of adult clients receiving emergency food assistance from emergency kitchens and food pantries sampled in the EFAS Provider Survey. Section A provides an overview of the study design, Section B describes provider eligibility and response rates, and Section C briefly describes client interviewing methods, response rates, and sample sizes. Detailed information about the sample design and calculation of sample weights, data collection methods, and analytic methods are found in Appendices A through C.

A. STUDY DESIGN

The client survey portion of the EFAS study interviewed a sample of clients receiving emergency food assistance from the food pantries and soup kitchens that were sampled for the provider survey portion of the EFAS study.[1] The survey was designed to provide national estimates of the characteristics of individuals and households who receive food from emergency kitchens and food pantries, respectively. Discussed below are the main features of the study: the target population, the sample design, and the sample weighting procedures.

1. Population

The *target population* for the client survey is clients age 18 or older who received food from an emergency kitchen or food pantry during the survey's data collection period.[2] The

[1]The sample frame for the EFAS Provider Survey was the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia.

[2]Data were also obtained on children accompanying adults at emergency kitchens, and the household composition of adult clients, so that use of emergency kitchens and pantries by children could be reported.

characteristics of individuals and households and the exact definition of a "client" varies for food pantries and emergency kitchens, as explained below.

a. Food Pantries

The target population for food pantries includes all households with at least one adult 18 or older receiving packages on- or off-site from a food pantry. We sampled each household as a single unit, not individual people, at food pantries. A household is typically defined as the group of people occupying the same housing unit, or, in the case of the homeless, living in the same place, including related family members and unrelated people, such as roommates, lodgers, foster children, wards, or employees who reside in the housing unit. Some portion of a pantry's clients may be homeless.

b. Emergency Kitchens

The target population for emergency kitchens is clients age 18 or older receiving meals on- or off-site from an emergency kitchen. An emergency kitchen could also distribute prepared meals for clients to take off-site, such as brown bag lunches for weekend consumption when the kitchen is closed or bag lunches distributed in a park. For this study, an emergency kitchen was defined as a facility that provides prepared meals to clients in need who do not reside on the facility's premises. Thus, kitchens co-located with shelters, which provide shelter and meals primarily (or only) to residents, are excluded from the client survey.[3] Facilities distributing food under Title IIIC of the Older Americans Act, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs were also excluded. When food distribution is

[3] The target population for emergency kitchens are those which serve clients who can "walk-in" and receive a meal, rather than those which only serve meals to shelter residents. In order to target primarily non-resident clients, we excluded kitchens that were co-located with shelters from the sample frame.

incidental to other services, as in substance abuse treatment facilities, summer camps, Kids' Cafés™,[4] and senior day care facilities, the facility was excluded from the study.

2. Sample Design

The sample design for the client survey builds upon the design and sample frame developed and used for the provider survey, as shown in Figure II.1. The provider survey collected information from food banks, food rescue organizations, and emergency food organizations, as well as from emergency kitchens and food pantries, from March through October 2000. The client survey focused on clients visiting emergency kitchens and food pantries from August through November 2001. The overall approach used for data collection in the client survey was as follows:

- We selected a stratified subsample of 60 of the 360 primary sampling units (PSUs) originally selected in the EFAS Provider Survey.[5]
- We selected a random subsample of pantries and kitchens within these 60 PSUs.
- We selected a particular time period for interviewing.
- We selected a systematic sample of adult clients for each selected kitchen and pantry.
- We conducted client interviews at the provider's sites, using cellular telephones dialed into MPR's computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) facilities.

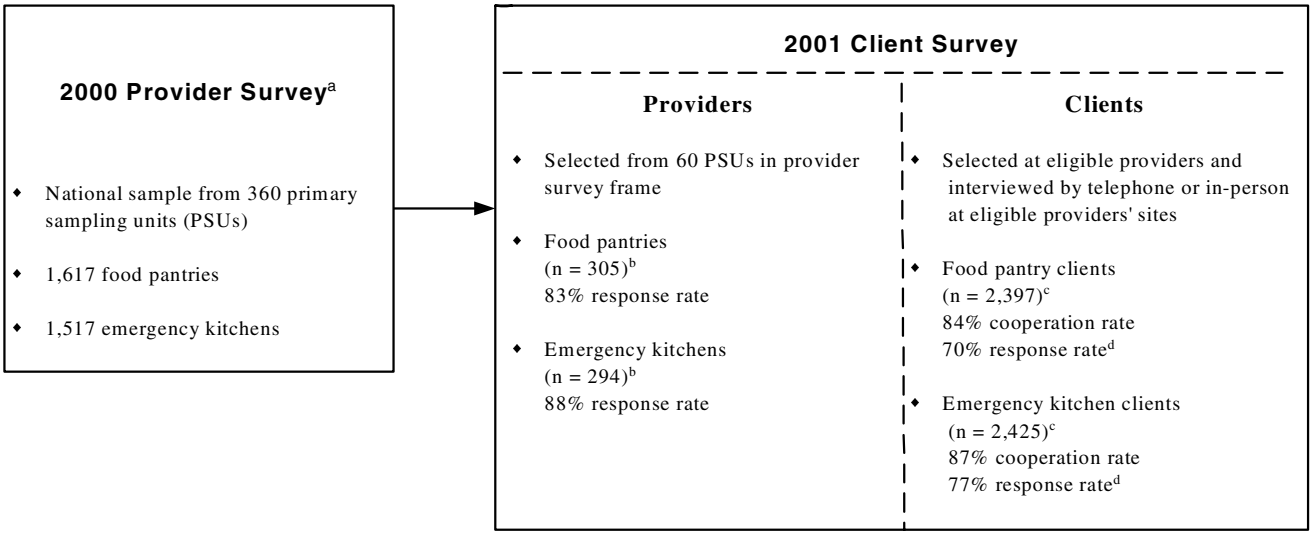
Figure II.1 provides the overall response rates and sample sizes for providers and clients in the client survey. Additional details about providers' eligibility rates and clients' response rates are below.

[4]Kids' Café™ is a charitable after-school feeding program sponsored by America's Second Harvest which provides free food and nutrition education to children at churches and community centers ("Kids Café," www.secondharvest.org/childhunger/kidscafe.html, June 6, 2002).

[5]For the provider survey, a random sample of 360 primary sampling units (PSUs) was drawn from the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia.

FIGURE II.1

OVERVIEW OF STUDY DESIGN



SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Study, 2000 and 2001.

[a]The provider survey also collected information from 395 food banks, 88 food rescue organizations, and 117 emergency food organizations.

[b]Numbers reflect providers sampled.

[c]Numbers reflect clients with complete interviews.

[d]The client response rate is the product of the provider response rate and the client cooperation rate.

3. Sample Weights

Estimates based on the client survey must account for the survey's complex sample design and for the biasing effects that nonresponse could have had. A number of practical considerations in implementing the design resulted in unequal probabilities of selection. Therefore, MPR constructed sampling weights that reflect the differential selection probabilities used to sample EFAS providers across PSUs. Furthermore, using the sampling weights for providers and information gathered during data collection, MPR constructed sampling weights that reflect the selection probabilities used to sample clients at pantries and kitchens.

Nonresponse can also lead to distortions of the respondent sample with respect to the total population. Adjustments were made to both the provider and client sampling weights to compensate for such distortions, using a weighting class method. In addition, the nonresponse-adjusted provider weights were adjusted through a poststratification procedure. Finally, because the sampling units are visits, and individuals can make multiple visits during the data collection period, reported information on how often a client visited an EFAS provider or providers is used to adjust for multiple selection opportunities, which results in an unduplicated client weight. Appendix A provides further details about the sample design and weights.

B. ELIGIBILITY AND RESPONSE OF PROVIDERS

As shown in Figure II.1, 305 food pantries and 294 emergency kitchens were selected from the provider survey frame. Providers were contacted from July through November 2001 to inform them that their site had been selected for surveying clients, to verify and update information on current operations, and to enlist their cooperation. Table A.1 (Appendix A) shows the results of our contacts to selected providers. Approximately one-fourth of providers (27 percent of pantries and 26 percent of kitchens) were determined to be ineligible for the following reasons:

- 16 percent of pantries and 10 percent of kitchens were "no longer in business."
- 8 percent of pantries served fewer than five clients per day.[6]
- 14 percent of kitchens were co-located with a shelter.
- 1 percent of kitchens and 4 percent of pantries were ineligible for other reasons such as "distribution to off-site only" and "emergency operation only."

Eligibility could not be determined for 24 providers (6 percent of pantries and 2 percent of kitchens). We could not contact these providers either through multiple telephone attempts, or, in many cases, through in-person visits to the provider's address to determine if they were still in operation (Table A.1). We interviewed clients at 88 percent of the pantries known to be eligible and 91 percent of the kitchens known to be eligible (referred to as the cooperation rate in Table II.1). The provider refusal rate, 4 percent, was low. The overall response rate is the product of the eligibility determination rate and the cooperation rate. The overall response rates for pantries and kitchens are 83 percent and 88 percent, respectively.

Visits to providers to interview clients were conducted with a total of 180 pantries and 191 kitchens. We compared the general characteristics of these providers with the total sample of providers in the provider survey, using the appropriate sample weights to reflect the population of kitchens and pantries. Tables II.2 and II.3 show the results of these comparisons for pantries and kitchens, respectively. For both pantries and kitchens, in general, the mean characteristics for metropolitan status, type of organization and affiliations, and length of time in operation were similar for the providers surveyed in 2000 and the providers visited in 2001 for the client survey (all of the tabulations in Tables II.2 and II.3 are based on providers' responses at the time of the

[6]To be eligible for the client survey, providers had to meet a minimum size requirement of five or more clients per day to assure data collection.

TABLE II.1

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND RESPONSE RATES
FOR CONTACTING EFAS PROVIDERS

	Food Pantries	Emergency Kitchens
Response Category		
Eligible, respondent	180	191
Eligible, nonrespondent	25	20
Ineligible	83	76
Eligibility unknown	17	7
TOTAL	305	294
Response Rates (%)		
Eligibility determination rate	94	98
Cooperation rate	88	91
Response rate[a]	83	88

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance Study Client Survey (2001).

[a]Product of the eligibility determination rate and the cooperation rate.

TABLE II.2

COMPARISON OF SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOD PANTRIES BY PARTICIPATION STATUS (Weighted Percentages)

Characteristics	All Food Pantries Surveyed in the 2000 Provider Survey	Food Pantries Selected and Visited in the 2001 Client Survey	Food Pantries Selected, but No Longer in Operation, at the Time of the 2001 Client Survey
Region			
West	15.1	20.5	7.9
Midwest	24.6	22.9	44.5
South	40.1	28.0	36.4
Northeast	20.3	28.5	11.2
Metropolitan Status			
Metropolitan	70.3	71.1	74.1
Nonmetropolitan	29.7	28.9	25.9
Size of Pantry			
Small	37.9	9.7	30.3
Medium	35.3	37.1	33.5
Large	24.8	52.4	31.9
Type of Organization			
Nonprofit, associated with religious group	67.1	65.1	74.1
Nonreligious private nonprofit	25.4	28.1	24.3
Governmental	3.0	3.9	0.0
Informal group of people	2.3	2.0	0.9
Other	1.6	0.6	0.0
Missing data	0.5	0.2	0.7
Selected Organizational Affiliations[a]			
United Way	19.5	22.9	14.5
Salvation Army	11.0	9.2	9.0
Catholic Charities	8.4	12.0	0.4
Red Cross	6.0	4.9	0.5
Other nonprofit organization[b]	17.6	22.1	19.7
Programs with Which Provider Is Co-Located[c]			
Food bank	3.7	5.1	20.5
Food rescue program	1.4	1.0	0.0
Emergency shelter	0.5	0.0	0.0
Emergency kitchen	9.1	5.9	23.5

TABLE II.2 (*continued*)

Characteristics	All Food Pantries Surveyed in the 2000 Provider Survey	Food Pantries Selected and Visited in the 2001 Client Survey	Food Pantries Selected, but No Longer in Operation, at the Time of the 2001 Client Survey
Length of Time Surveyed Location Has Been Operating[d]			
Less than 1 year	5.7	11.6	9.1
1 to 3 years	22.2	22.0	39.0
4 to 5 years	11.1	10.4	8.9
6 years or longer			
6 to 10 years	17.9	13.7	5.4
11 to 15 years	10.1	12.1	21.3
16 to 20 years	12.5	13.3	6.5
21 to 25 years	2.8	5.3	0.0
Longer than 25 years	4.7	4.2	8.6
Not specified	12.3	6.6	1.2
Missing data	0.8	0.8	0.0
Sample Size	1,617	180	48

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Provider Survey (2000) and Client Survey (2001).

[a]Categories do not add to 100 percent because many providers do not have any organizational affiliations.

[b]Other nonprofit organizations not included in this estimate include America's Second Harvest. Providers were asked directly about their affiliation with America's Second Harvest, but there was underreporting since many providers do not realize that the food that they receive is from a Second Harvest-affiliated food bank. Therefore, we do not provide a separate estimate for America's Second Harvest affiliation.

[c]Categories do not add to 100 percent because many providers are not co-located with another provider.

[d]Length of time in operation reflects the provider's response at the time of the survey in 2000.

TABLE II.3

COMPARISON OF SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF EMERGENCY KITCHENS BY PARTICIPATION STATUS (Weighted Percentages)

Characteristics	All Emergency Kitchens Surveyed in the 2000 Provider Survey	Emergency Kitchens Selected and Visited in the 2001 Client Survey	Emergency Kitchens Selected, but No Longer in Operation at the Time of the 2001 Client Survey
Region			
West	20.6	17.5	10.6
Midwest	24.7	27.2	23.6
South	27.4	21.0	17.3
Northeast	27.4	34.2	48.5
Metropolitan Status			
Metropolitan	85.6	87.8	78.9
Nonmetropolitan	14.4	12.2	21.1
Size of Emergency Kitchen			
Small	37.3	28.6	41.9
Medium	31.4	32.2	39.3
Large	30.7	39.1	18.8
Type of Organization			
Nonprofit, associated with religious group	65.5	58.3	69.3
Nonreligious private nonprofit	30.1	37.9	28.1
Governmental	1.1	0.9	0.0
Informal group of people	1.6	0.0	0.0
Other	1.5	2.9	2.6
Selected Organizational Affiliations[a]			
United Way	26.1	35.4	20.2
Salvation Army	14.0	14.7	7.4
Catholic Charities	8.9	6.6	11.5
Red Cross	4.8	5.1	7.2
Other nonprofit organization[b]	18.4	17.9	1.9
Programs with Which Provider Is Co-Located[c]			
Food bank	1.0	0.0	5.8
Food rescue program	1.4	0.6	13.9
Emergency shelter	6.6	0.0	0.0

TABLE II.3 (*continued*)

Characteristics	All Emergency Kitchens Surveyed in the 2000 Provider Survey	Emergency Kitchens Selected and Visited in the 2001 Client Survey	Emergency Kitchens Selected, but No Longer in Operation at the Time of the 2001 Client Survey
Food pantry	39.5	40.3	52.4
Length of Time Surveyed Location Has Been Operating[d]			
Less than 1 year	3.3	2.6	6.4
1 to 3 years	15.0	10.8	25.8
4 to 5 years	9.6	9.4	23.3
6 years or longer			
6 to 10 years	22.3	20.8	3.8
11 to 15 years	12.7	10.1	11.3
16 to 20 years	16.9	28.8	12.6
21 to 25 years	2.7	1.7	0.0
Longer than 25 years	6.8	6.3	2.4
Not specified	10.2	9.6	14.4
Missing data	0.4	0.0	0.0
SAMPLE SIZE	**1,517**	**191**	**31**

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Provider Survey (2000) and Client Survey (2001).

[a]Categories do not add to 100 percent because many kitchens do not have any organizational affiliations.

[b]Other nonprofit organizations not included in this estimate include America's Second Harvest. Providers were asked directly about their affiliation with America's Second Harvest, but there was underreporting since many providers do not realize that the food that they receive is from a Second Harvest-affiliated food bank. Therefore, we do not provide a separate estimate for America's Second Harvest affiliation.

[c]Categories do not add to 100 percent because many kitchens are not co-located with another provider.

[d]Length of time in operation reflects the provider's response at the time of the survey in 2000.

2000 survey; that is, providers were not interviewed again in 2001). Some regional differences exist between the two samples, with fewer providers in the South and more in the Northeast for the 2001 sample. As expected, the client survey providers have a smaller proportion of 'small' providers[7] because we excluded those seeing fewer than five clients per day for operational reasons.

In addition, we report the characteristics of providers who are no longer in operation. The majority of these providers were in business from one to five years, at the time of the 2000 provider survey. Kitchens no longer in operation are more likely to be in the Northeast and co-located with a food pantry or a food rescue program. Pantries no longer in operation are more likely to be in the Midwest and co-located with an emergency kitchen or a food bank. Although the overall sample sizes are too small to draw definitive conclusions, this provides some general information about the characteristics of kitchens and pantries that left the EFAS system during the year before the client survey.

We speculate that EFAS providers who go out of business are replaced by other providers who enter the system, as evidenced by the finding that 5 percent of pantries and 3 percent of kitchens were in operation for less than one year at the time of the 2000 survey. However, it is unclear whether those providers who enter the system serve a smaller, greater, or similar number of clients as those providers who left the system.

[7]Kitchen size was classified by the number of meals at their largest meal service on a typical day. "Small" is fewer than 60 meals; "medium" is between 60 and 120 meals; and "large" is more than 120 meals. Pantry size was classified by the number of households served in a typical month; "small" is fewer than 30 households; "medium" is between 30 and 150 households; and "large" is more than 150 households per month (Ohls et al. 2001).

C. CLIENT INTERVIEWS

1. Data Collection Methods

Client interviews were conducted from August 13 through November 17, 2001 using cellular telephones and CATI methods. Two trained enumerators/interviewers visited each provider site selected for the study.[8] Adult clients, 18 years of age or older, were selected based on an interval sampling plan implemented at each of the sampled EFAS sites. In general, the survey took about 15 minutes to administer. In areas without cellular telephone reception, trained interviewers administered the interview in-person, using hard-copy questionnaire. Respondents received a $10 cash remuneration for their participation.

The interviews asked clients about their reasons for visiting the emergency kitchen or food pantry, how often they used emergency food assistance services, their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, their current and past participation in federal nutrition assistance and other benefit programs, Food Stamp Program eligibility, events that led them to seek emergency food assistance, the frequency with which they seek such assistance, their satisfaction with the amount and variety of food received, and their household food security. Appendix B describes the process used to develop and test the survey instrument, the use of proxy respondents and translators, and administration by CATI and hard-copy formats.

2. Client Response and Reasons for Nonresponse

As shown in Table II.4 the cooperation rates for pantry and kitchen clients are 84 percent and 87 percent, respectively. The overall response rates, which take into consideration both provider and client nonresponse, are 70 percent for pantry clients and 77 percent for kitchen clients.

[8]Large providers had a maximum of three scheduled visits to conduct client interviews.

TABLE II.4

ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION AND RESPONSE RATES FOR CLIENTS

	Food Pantries	Emergency Kitchens
Response Category		
Eligible, respondent[a]	2,408 (83.7%)	2,444 (84.4%)
Eligible, refusal	374 (13.0%)	316 (10.9%)
Eligible, other nonresponse[b]	70 (2.4%)	42 (1.4%)
Ineligible	26 (0.9%)	95 (3.3%)
TOTAL	2,878 (100%)	2,897 (100%)
Response Rates (%)		
Provider response rate	83%	88%
Client cooperation rate	84%	87%
Client response rate[c]	70%	77%

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Study Client Survey (2001).

[a]Of the eligible respondents, 19 kitchen interviews and 11 pantry interviews were later excluded from data analysis because they did not meet the criteria for a complete interview. Respondents needed to answer questions about their EFAS use, age, gender, and education level at a minimum to be defined as a complete interview (that is, responding through question number C4 of the instrument).

[b]Clients with mental or physical impairment who were selected, but unable to complete the interview, and for whom no proxy was available.

[c]Product of the provider response rate and the client cooperation rate.

The reasons for client nonresponse vary from choices that clients made because of severe weather, transportation problems, personal safety, lack of time, and apathy to operations problems, such as telephone communication problems and the decision to cancel a visit for interviewer safety. (See Appendix B, section 3.g for more information on the specific reasons for client nonresponse.)

3. Data Analysis

The data shown in this report reflects data analyzed with households as the level of observation for food pantry clients and with individuals as the unit of observation for emergency kitchen clients. Important information on household characteristics, and children or other family members accompanying adult clients at emergency kitchens, is used to report (1) the numbers of adults and children served by pantries and kitchens, and (2) food program eligibility and participation by EFAS clients and their families. These study findings are reported in separate chapters for pantry client households and kitchen clients. For pantries, we also report sociodemographic characteristics of the main household respondent. Table II.5 shows the subgroup sample sizes of emergency kitchen and food pantry clients by race/ethnicity and gender, and by four age groups and gender. Table D.1 (Appendix D) provides subgroup sample sizes by the four age groups, race/ethnicity, and gender. Small subgroup sample sizes limited our ability to analyze some domains of interest.

The same survey instrument was used with both pantry and kitchen clients. The only difference between the kitchen and pantry samples is the wording of the questions on kitchen and pantry use. The survey data were edited and reviewed with consistent editing and coding procedures applied to the kitchen and pantry samples. Our analytic procedures and definitions for key analytic variables are described in Appendix C.

TABLE II.5

SAMPLE SIZES OF INTERVIEWED CLIENTS

Characteristic	Emergency Kitchen Clients			Food Pantry Clients		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
RACE/ETHNICITY						
Non-Hispanic White	451	280	731	269	656	925
Non-Hispanic Black	906	367	1,273	275	518	793
Hispanic	175	98	273	137	425	562
Other Race/Ethnicity	88	40	128	43	53	96
Unknown Race/Ethnicity	12	7	20[a]	6	15	21
AGE GROUP						
Ages 18 – 29 years	155	114	269	62	229	291
Ages 30 - 44 years	648	345	993	251	600	851
Ages 45 – 59 years	692	217	909	249	439	688
Ages 60 years and older	137	115	252	166	396	562
Total[b]	**1,632**	**792**	**2,425**	**730**	**1,667**	**2,397**

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance Study Client Survey (2001).

[a]Includes one case with missing gender.
[b]Includes up to seven cases with missing age and one case with missing gender.

III. CHARACTERISTICS OF PANTRY CLIENTS

Food pantries serve the majority of EFAS clients, and therefore also provide the bulk of food to low-income clients served by the EFAS. In this chapter, we describe the characteristics of households that use food pantries, including household food security and other measures of hardship. We review the extent to which pantry clients rely on different forms of emergency food assistance, and analyze pantry clients' satisfaction with the food they receive from the pantry they visited on the day of the interview. Because pantry households may include persons eligible for one of several government food assistance programs, we report the participation of household members in these programs, as well as pantry respondents' explanations for why their households do not participate in programs for which they appear eligible.[1] We also describe key characteristics of pantry client households defined by (1) demographic composition which is relevant to food assistance programs and policy-making and (2) use of private and/or public food assistance to better understand those households who rely solely on one or more EFAS sources, or those who rely on private and public food assistance to try to meet their food needs.

A. NUMBERS OF CLIENTS SERVED BY FOOD PANTRIES

We estimated monthly numbers of unique or different households served by food pantries based on the numbers of households observed at the pantries we visited, and how often clients reported that they received food from one or more pantries per month. Based on these data,

[1]Because pantry clients include every member of the survey respondent's household, we do not focus in this chapter on the characteristics of the household member who completed the survey. Most pantry respondents (who were at the pantry picking up food for their household) were age 45 or older (54 percent), female (71 percent), either Hispanic or non-white (51 percent), unmarried (74 percent), without a college education (80 percent), in fair or poor health (54 percent), U.S. citizens (93 percent), and not in the labor force (62 percent). See appendix tables D.2 and D.3 for details.

about 4.3 million different households received food from food pantries during a typical month in 2001 (table III.1). The total number of people served by food pantries was 12.5 million (8.0 million adults and 4.5 million children under age 18) during a typical month in 2001.

TABLE III.1

ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF DIFFERENT CLIENTS SERVED BY FOOD PANTRIES WEEKLY AND MONTHLY IN 2001

	Weekly Number	Monthly Number
Households	1.5 million	4.3 million
Total Persons	4.3 million	12.5 million
Adults	2.8 million	8.0 million
Children	1.5 million	4.5 million

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: See appendix A for details regarding the methods used to estimate unique numbers of client households and total clients.

There are several reasons why it is reasonable to focus on the number of unique clients served by pantries per month. About half (discussed later in section E) of pantry client households visit a food pantry once a month or less, and two-thirds of food pantries restrict visits to once a month or less per household (Ohls et al. 2000). To estimate monthly numbers of households and people served by food pantries, we first estimate weekly numbers.[2] We then calculate the monthly number based on how often clients visit food pantries per month. As described more fully in appendix A, these estimates are derived from sampling probabilities and

[2]Estimated numbers of households and people served weekly by pantries are included in Table III.1 for reference purposes.

include adjustments for survey nonresponse and other factors relating to survey coverage. The estimates may be quite sensitive to a number of factors including sampling error, measurement error, non-coverage of small providers and providers who are open infrequently or on an 'emergency basis' only, and seasonality. (The latter factor results from the data collection having been limited to only approximately four months.) However, despite these limitations, we believe that the estimates provide the best estimates of the food pantry population which can be obtained from the available data, and that they represent a reasonably good approximation of the number of pantry client households and clients at food pantries in a typical month.

The study design limits our ability to precisely measure patterns of use over a year and to estimate the total number of households and clients served by food pantries during 2001. First, data were collected for a 14-week period rather than for a year's period so the survey data do not reflect seasonal patterns of food pantry usage. Second, while we collected a limited amount of data about clients' use of pantries for the previous 12 months, space limitations on the instrument precluded obtaining all the data necessary to fully characterize annual usage. Also, these data may contain considerable measurement error in clients' abilities to accurately report the number of months in the last 12 months that they visited a food pantry.

The annual number cannot be derived by simply multiplying the monthly number by 12, which would assume that an entirely new set of clients is served each month, nor is it equal to the monthly number, which would assume that no new clients are served each month. Some indication of the potential range of possible numbers of different clients annually can be derived by examining the implications of alternative estimates of turnover in the system, where we define turnover as the average percentage of the clientele which is "new" each month in the sense of not having used a pantry in the previous 12 months. If, to take a likely lower bound, we assume that this turnover rate is only 4 percent per month, this would imply that the annual

number of different clients is 18.0 million. On the other hand, if, we assume a monthly turnover rate of 8 percent of the caseload, this would imply that the annual number of different clients is 23.5 million.

This range for the estimated annual number of pantry clients (18.0 to 23.5 million people) is somewhat lower than the annual estimate reported for America's Second Harvest study, which was 21.1 to 26.1 million people, although the two ranges partially overlap. (For the Second Harvest estimate, see Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001, as modified by subsequent revisions which will be reflected in the final version.) Furthermore, this direction of the difference is surprising, because the sample frame for the Second Harvest estimate was limited to food pantries served by Second Harvest food banks, and therefore narrower than that for the EFAS study. Several reasons may explain the difference: (1) different data collection methods including sample frames, survey questions, and mode of interview, (2) statistical sampling error in both surveys, (3) measurement error, (4) seasonality, and (5) different estimation approaches. The EFAS client survey's estimate of 18.0 to 23.5 million annual pantry clients is substantially higher than the 7.7 million pantry clients estimated using data collected in the September 2000 Current Population Survey (CPS) (Nord et al. 2002). Reasons for these differences may include different survey methods and the absence of the homeless population in the CPS, which would underestimate the total number of pantry clients in the U.S.

B. HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

In this section, we consider the demographic characteristics and residential status of pantry households, as well as indicators of the material hardship experienced by these households. We describe the food security of pantry households in a separate section (C), below.

1. Demographic Characteristics of Pantry Households

Three-tenths of pantry households (29 percent) are single-person households (table III.2). Of these households, more are female (18 percent) than are male (11 percent). About 31 percent of pantry client households include at least four people. Almost one-half (45 percent) of pantry client households include children under the age of 18. One-third (32 percent) of pantry client households include a person 60 or older. One-quarter (26 percent) of pantry client households include an employed person, and 45 percent of client households received case welfare in the last month.

The vast majority (87 percent) of pantry respondents report that all members of their household are U.S. citizens. About 69 percent of client households receive pantry assistance in a metropolitan area.

2. Residential Status of Pantry Households

About three-fifths (62 percent) of all pantry households report renting their residence, and one-quarter (24 percent) include homeowners (table III.3). Only 6 percent of pantry households include respondents who live in their residence for free, and about 8 percent of pantry households are homeless.[3]

The most common type of residence pantry households occupy is a house or condominium (43 percent), followed by an apartment (35 percent) and by a mobile home (15 percent). Only 7 percent of pantry households reside in other settings. Of households residing in a house or condominium, one-half rent the residence, and 38 percent include homeowners. Of households

[3]Homeless respondents either indicated that they consider themselves homeless, or that they live in locations (shelters/missions, cars/vans, abandoned buildings, public places/railroad stations, or outdoors) not intended to serve as permanent housing.

TABLE III.2

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS OF FOOD PANTRY CLIENTS

Characteristic	Percent Unless Otherwise Stated	(SE)
Household Composition		
Single female respondent living alone	17.6	1.59
Single male respondent living alone	11.0	1.57
Single respondent living with children under the age of 18	26.1	1.84
Married/cohabiting respondent living with children under the age of 18	19.1	2.16
Married/cohabiting respondent living without children under the age of 18	13.5	1.17
Single respondent living with other adult(s)	12.7	1.87
Number of Household Members		
1	29.5	2.42
2	20.6	1.36
3	19.0	1.81
4	14.3	1.32
5	7.6	0.88
6 or more	9.1	1.23
Average number	2.9	0.10
Median number	2.0	0.39
Number of Children Age 0-17		
0	54.9	2.62
1	15.7	1.54
2	15.3	2.32
3	7.4	1.35
4 or more	6.6	0.90
Average number	1.0	0.08
Number of Household Members Age 60 or Older		
0	68.0	2.55
1	24.7	2.18
2	6.5	1.07
More than 2	0.9	0.64
Household contains members who are employed	26.4	2.60
Proportion of households with cash welfare last month	44.5	3.48
Proportion of households with cash welfare and person employed	6.2	0.91
U.S. Citizenship		
No household members are citizens	1.3	0.47
Some household members are citizens	11.9	1.78
All household members are citizens	86.7	2.10
Metropolitan Status of Provider		
Metropolitan	69.4	9.95
Non-Metropolitan	30.6	9.95
Sample Size	2,397	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE III.3

RESIDENTIAL STATUS OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS

	Reside in This Setting		Of Those Residing in This Setting, Percentage That Are Not Homeless						Are Homeless	
			Own Residence		Rent Residence		Reside for Free			
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
All settings	100.0	0.00	24.2	2.53	61.9	2.87	5.8	1.00	8.0	1.65
House/condominium	43.0	3.16	37.5	3.85	50.5	4.97	9.0	2.08	3.0	0.61
Mobile Home	15.3	3.10	51.4	4.65	40.2	4.06	5.0	1.27	3.3	1.38
Apartment	34.7	3.55	0.5	0.25	93.2	1.59	2.9	0.70	3.3	1.55
Room	2.6	0.70	N/A	--	42.7	11.61	6.2	3.72	51.0	13.07
Hotel/Motel	1.7	0.63	N/A	--	37.3	15.58	0.5	0.54	62.2	15.59
Shelter/Mission	0.5	0.16	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100	0.00
Car/Van	1.3	0.53	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100	0.00
Abandoned Building	0.0	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100	0.00
Public Space/ Railroad Station	0.3	0.17	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100	0.00
Outside	0.6	0.22	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100	0.00
SAMPLE SIZE	2,381		459		1,589		142		191	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: When type of ownership is missing (for example, own, rent, live for free and not homeless, or live for free and considered homeless, as well as the cases with missing residential setting), the case is excluded from the first column.

N/A = not applicable.

living in an apartment, 93 percent rent their residence. One-half (51 percent) of households living in mobile homes own their residence, and two-fifths (40 percent) are renters.

C. FOOD SECURITY

Food security, defined as "access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life" (Bickel et al. 2000; Hamilton et al. 1997), was used to categorize household food security based on responses to a six-item short form.[4] About 79 percent of pantry households were classified as food insecure during the 12 months preceding the interview (table III.4). About 38 percent of pantry respondents were food insecure without hunger, and 42 percent of pantry respondents were food insecure with hunger (fig.III.1). One-fourth (26 percent, table D.4) of all pantry client households report that one or more adult members did not eat for a whole day because of a lack of money for food.[5] This is an indication of severe food-related hardship for a subset of pantry client households.

While food insecurity is common among all household types, the prevalence and severity of food insecurity varies by household composition. For example, 58 percent of pantry client households with neither children nor elderly are food insecure with hunger, compared with 40 percent of households with children, and 25 percent of households with at least one elderly person but no children (fig. III.2).

Since, as we describe below, more pantry households participate in the Food Stamp Program

[4]In addition to the six-item short form, a seventh question on adults not eating for a whole day was included since this is a likely population to be vulnerable to food insecurity. These questions are a subset of the standard 18-item measure used by USDA for its annual estimates of food security in the U.S. See appendix C for details about the food security measurement.

[5]We also assessed responses to individual indicators of food insecurity and hunger for all pantry households and for households of different sizes (Table D.4 in appendix D).

TABLE III.4

FOOD SECURITY STATUS OF FOOD PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS,
BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE (Percentages)

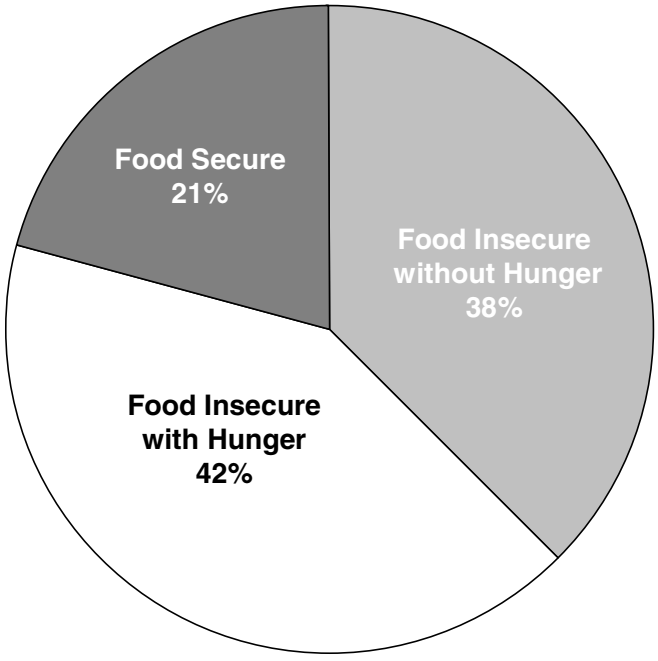
	All Households	(SE)	Households With Children Under 18[a]	(SE)	Households With No Children but With Seniors (60 or Older)	(SE)
Food Secure	20.8	2.18	20.4	3.03	30.9	4.71
Food Insecure	79.2	2.18	79.6	3.03	69.1	4.71
Food Insecure without Hunger	37.7	1.55	40.0	2.34	44.6	4.01
Food Insecure with Hunger	41.5	1.88	39.6	2.05	24.5	2.51
SAMPLE SIZE	2,372		1,091		566	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]14 percent of pantry client households also contain a person age 60 or older.

FIGURE III.1

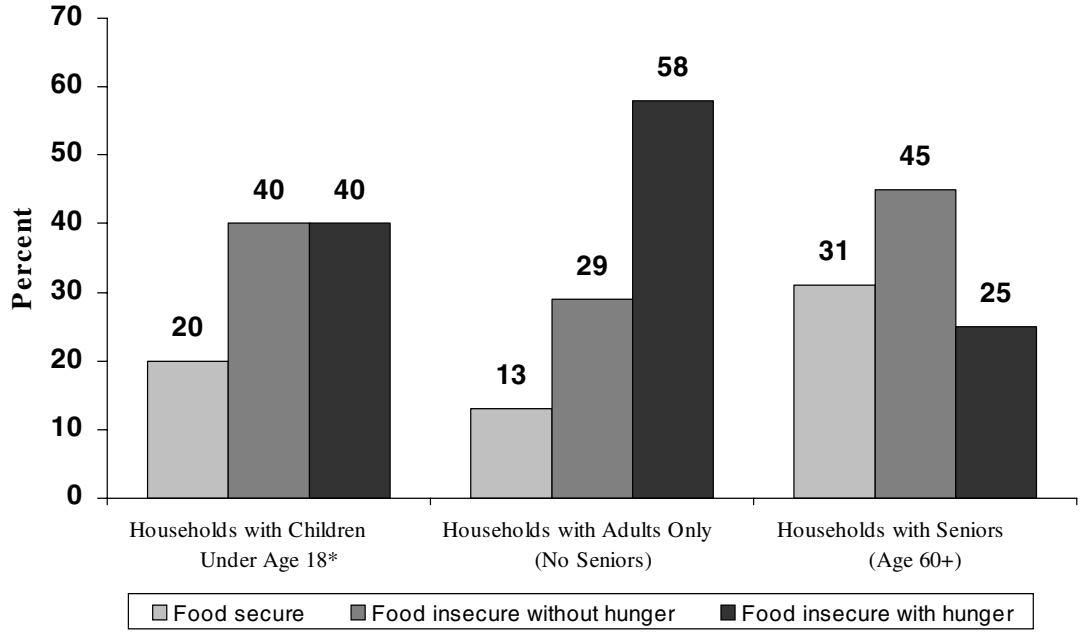
FOOD SECURITY STATUS OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



Note: Categories do not add to 100 due to rounding.

FIGURE III.2

FOOD SECURITY AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



*14 percent of pantry households with children also have seniors. Note: Categories may not add to 100 due to rounding.

(FSP) than in any other government food assistance program, it is useful to consider how food security for pantry households receiving food stamps compares with food security for other pantry households. The food security patterns for pantry households receiving food stamps are generally similar to those observed for other low-income, low-resource pantry client households (table III.5). For households ineligible for FSP benefits because of higher levels of income and resources, however, the proportion that is food secure (35 percent) is substantially higher than for households participating in the FSP (18 percent) and other FSP-eligible households (19 percent). It is interesting to note that about one-third (35 percent) of all pantry households ineligible for food stamps are classified as food secure. These households appear to be using food pantries as

TABLE III.5

FOOD SECURITY STATUS OF FOOD PANTRY HOUSEHOLDS,
BY PARTICIPATION IN THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM
(Percentages)

	All Pantry Households	(SE)	Pantry Households That Participate in FSP[a]	(SE)	Pantry Households That Do Not Receive Food Stamps, but Are Seemingly Eligible	(SE)	Pantry Households That Do Not Receive Food Stamps and Are Seemingly Ineligible for FSP	(SE)
Food Secure	20.8	2.18	17.8	3.19	19.0	2.61	35.1	5.89
Food Insecure	79.2	2.18	82.2	3.19	81.0	2.61	64.9	5.89
Food Insecure without Hunger	37.7	1.55	38.7	2.27	36.9	2.60	38.5	3.50
Food Insecure with Hunger	41.5	1.88	43.5	2.78	44.1	2.40	26.4	5.12
SAMPLE SIZE	2,372		1,071		984		249	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a] Defined as participation in the last year.

a way of preventing food insecurity, although food pantries would not be considered a normal source of food for food-secure households.

D. INCOME, POVERTY, AND MATERIAL HARDSHIP

The survey of EFAS clients allows us to construct both income- and consumption-oriented measures of the hardships faced by pantry households. Using income-oriented measures, we can compare the monthly or annual cash income of a household with the corresponding poverty threshold for households of that size. Using consumption-oriented measures, we can investigate what proportion of pantry households have access to certain basic necessities, such as permanent shelter and sufficient food to avoid food insecurity or at least hunger.

1. Income and Poverty Levels

The survey of EFAS clients included two measures of household income: (1) last month's income, and (2) last year's income. The average income of pantry households was $781 for the most recent month, and $10,776 for the most recent year (table III.6). Average monthly income for the most recent year ($898 or $10,776 ÷ 12) was higher than average income for the most recent month, consistent with the hypothesis that the average pantry household has experienced a recent decline in its cash income. Compared with the corresponding average income levels, median household income levels were somewhat lower: $660 for the most recent month, and $8,000 for the most recent year.

In the most recent month, 93 percent of pantry households had incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level, and therefore met the gross income requirement for the Food Stamp Program. Only 8 percent of pantry households had incomes above 130 percent of the poverty level during the most recent month, and only 13 percent had incomes above 130 percent of the

TABLE III.6

INCOME AND POVERTY OF FOOD PANTRY CLIENTS

Characteristic	Percent Unless Otherwise Stated	(SE)
Household Income Last Month (mean dollars)	781	36.5
Household Income Last Month (median dollars)	660	25.4
Household Income Last Month as a Percentage of Poverty		
At or below 130%	92.5	1.72
Above 130%	7.5	1.72
Annual Household Income (mean dollars)	10,776	770.4
Annual Household Income (median dollars)	8,000	165.8
Annual Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty		
At or below 50%	31.7	2.52
51 to 100%	43.7	2.71
101 to 130%	11.5	1.57
Above 130%	13.1	2.77
Sample Size	2,397	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

poverty level during the most recent year. Three-quarters of pantry households were at or below the poverty level over the course of the most recent year.

2. Consumption-Oriented Indicators of Material Hardship

The various consumption-oriented indicators of material hardship we investigated in this study included homelessness, household food insecurity and hunger, and access to amenities useful for acquiring, storing, or preparing food (kitchen appliances, a working telephone, and a working motor vehicle). About 8 percent of all pantry households are homeless (table III.7). As noted in ection C, about four-fifths (79 percent) of pantry households are food insecure, and about two-fifths (42 percent) are food insecure with hunger. While only 3 percent of pantry households lack access to a stove, oven or microwave and only 5 percent lack access to a refrigerator,[6] 23 percent lack access to a working telephone, and almost half (49 percent) do not have access to a working car, truck, or motorcycle.

E. CHARACTERISTICS OF EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE SYSTEM USE

To make ends meet, pantry users might require additional sources of emergency food. Other private programs, such as kitchens and shelters, as well as government-sponsored programs, are possible avenues for food assistance.[7] In addition, clients might seek less traditional methods, such as food from restaurant handouts, trashcans, and dumpsters.[8]

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[6]Although 8 percent of pantry client households are homeless, these findings indicate that about half of them have access to at least some working kitchen appliances.

[7]Use of government-sponsored programs, including the Food Stamp Program (FSP), the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are discussed later in this chapter.

[8]Other coping strategies, such as borrowing food from others or sending children to a friend's or relative's home to eat, which are included in the CPS Food Security Supplement, were not measured by this survey.

TABLE III.7

INDICATORS OF HARDSHIP FOR FOOD PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS

Hardship Indicator	Frequency for All Clients	
	Percent	(SE)
Homeless	8.0	1.64
Food Insecure	79.2	2.18
Insecure without hunger	37.7	1.55
Insecure with hunger	41.5	1.88
Lack access to stove, oven, or microwave	3.4	0.84
Lack access to refrigerator	4.5	0.97
Lack access to a working telephone	23.1	1.70
Lack access to a working car, truck, or motorcycle	48.5	2.88
SAMPLE SIZE	2,388	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

1. Use of Other Sources of Emergency Food Assistance by Pantry Respondents

In order to characterize the use of other sources of emergency food assistance, respondents who were similar to each other in terms of monthly pantry use in the last year were placed into one of three groups: (1) those who visited a pantry once a month or less (55 percent), (2) those who visited two or three times a month (24 percent), and (3) those who visited weekly (four or more times a month) (21 percent). From the provider survey we know that two-thirds of pantries limit household visits to once a month or less. Therefore, these estimates of the frequency of visits most likely indicate the pantries' rules as well as the clients' desire to pick-up food at a certain frequency based on need.

Forty percent of all pantry respondents visited a pantry for 10 to 12 months in the last year (table III.8). Reliance on pantries during the last year is similar for respondents who visited pantries weekly as it was for respondents who visited two to three times a month or once a month or less. Thirty percent of all respondents visited only one to three months during the last year, a level of reliance suggesting that these households are either new, sporadic, or short-term users, or that the pantries they visit are open infrequently or on an 'emergency basis' only.

Most pantry households do not rely on additional emergency food assistance besides food pantries. One-fifth (19 percent) of pantry households received a meal from an emergency kitchen during the last year. Twelve percent of pantry households received food from a shelter during the last year, and 6 percent turned to restaurant handouts, dumpsters, or trashcans for food. During the month before the interview, 11 percent of pantry households received a meal from an emergency kitchen. Among households that received such meals, about half report fewer than four meals over the course of the last month.

TABLE III.8

USE OF EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE BY FOOD PANTRY CLIENTS
(Percentages)

	All Pantry Clients	(SE)	Clients Who Visit Once a Month or Less	(SE)	Clients Who Visit 2-3 Times a Month	(SE)	Clients Who Visit 4 or More Times a Month	(SE)
Proportion of all Pantry Clients	100	0.0	54.8	4.77	24.0	2.97	21.2	2.57
Number of Months Visited Pantries in the Last 12 Months								
1 - 3 months	29.7	1.70	34.3	2.65	27.9	3.51	20.2	3.65
4 - 6 months	21.3	2.12	21.0	2.95	20.4	2.37	23.1	2.79
7 - 9 months	9.4	0.91	9.6	1.26	8.6	2.06	9.6	1.69
10 - 12 months	39.5	3.01	35.1	5.09	43.2	3.73	47.0	4.06
Use of (Other) Sources of Emergency Food in the Last 12 Months								
Kitchens	19.0	2.55	13.3	2.60	28.2	6.02	23.4	3.95
Shelters	12.1	1.58	8.7	1.67	16.4	2.93	16.3	3.47
Restaurant handouts/dumpster/ trash can	5.7	1.08	3.8	0.91	8.9	2.96	6.8	2.05
Number of Meals at Kitchens in the Last Month								
None	88.9	1.58	93.4	1.46	82.8	2.70	84.4	3.10
1-3	5.3	0.79	3.5	0.82	8.5	1.69	6.1	1.48
4-9	3.6	0.89	1.8	0.60	5.8	2.13	6.1	1.76
30 or more	0.5	0.33	0.0	--	0.2	0.15	1.9	1.51
SAMPLE SIZE	2,397		1,251		581		565	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

2. Factors That Precipitated the Need for Emergency Food Assistance

Pantry respondents were read six possible explanations for seeking emergency food assistance, and were asked to identify which reasons applied to their household. The most frequent reason for needing emergency food assistance, identified by 93 percent of pantry respondents, is having low wages or being on a fixed income (table III.9). About 89 percent of respondents say they ran out of money or had high expenses. About 72 percent of pantry respondents say that they preferred to get food at a pantry instead of asking for assistance directly from the government. About two-thirds of pantry respondents cite unemployment or other job-related problems, and a similar fraction cites health or personal problems. About one-third (36 percent) of pantry respondents identify problems with food stamps or welfare as a reason for needing emergency food assistance.

3. Access to Emergency Food

Although many pantries provide food to anyone who says they need it, some pantries restrict who can receive food and how often. In some instances, respondents must meet income or residency guidelines, fall into a specific target group such as a certain age group, or be referred by a church or other agency (Ohls et al. 2001). Other factors that might affect whether an individual or household receives food include a pantry's hours and days of operation as well as frequency of visits.[9] About one in five pantry respondents (22 percent) report needing food from a pantry in the last 12 months, but not being able to get it (table III.10). In the EFAS Provider Survey, 39 percent of pantry providers reported having to limit food distribution due to lack of food at some time during the year (Ohls et al. 2001).

[9]The typical food pantry is open two times a week for three to four hours (Ohls et al. 2001).

TABLE III.9

EVENTS/FACTORS PRECIPITATING THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE BY PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS

	Percent	(SE)
Reasons for Seeking Emergency Food Assistance[a]		
Low wages/on a fixed income	93.0	1.11
No more money/high expenses	88.6	1.40
Prefer to get food here instead of asking for help from the government	72.4	2.51
Unemployment/other job-related problems	69.0	1.70
Health or personal problems	68.0	1.88
Problems with food stamps or welfare	36.4	2.54
SAMPLE SIZE[b]	2,388	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a] Multiple responses allowed for this question.
[b] Of the factors listed above, 65 individuals answered "don't know" and 3 refused to answer whether or not they "prefer to get food here instead of from the government; 20 or fewer individuals either answered "don't know" or refused to answer each of the other factors.

TABLE III.10

INACCESSIBILITY TO EMERGENCY FOOD
BY PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS

	Percent	(SE)
Proportion of Pantry Clients Who Had Trouble Getting Food From Pantries (n = 2,388)	22.0	2.09
Reasons For Inability To Get Food[a] (n = 584)		
Transportation problem	29.9	3.11
Provider ran out of food	10.9	1.88
Did not arrive on time	9.8	2.12
Came too often	9.2	1.64
Client was sick	8.1	2.02
Lack of information about provider services	7.0	1.53
No referral	6.7	2.37
Lacked proper identification or papers	4.7	1.37
Did not live in a certain area	4.5	1.11
Did not meet income guidelines	4.3	1.38
Closed-unspecified	4.3	0.93
Pantry closed on weekdays	3.8	1.22
Respondent's behavior	2.7	1.39
Pantry closed on weekends	2.3	0.89
Otherwise ineligible	1.7	0.58
Lines too long, overcrowded	1.2	0.76
Disabled	1.1	0.51
Other[b]	4.4	1.19
In the last 12 months, Client Has Been Unable To Get Food (n = 589)		
Often	22.0	1.80
Sometimes	25.2	3.07
Rarely	24.5	2.57
Only happened once	28.3	2.71

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Multiple responses allowed for this question.
[b]Includes all responses which were given by less than 1 percent of clients.

When asked to identify why they were sometimes unable to receive food from a pantry, respondents mention transportation problems more than any other reason (30 percent of respondents, table III.10). Eleven percent of respondents say they were unable to receive food because the pantry ran out of food, 10 percent say they did not arrive on time to receive food, and 9 percent say they came "too often." This latter explanation is consistent with the fact that two-thirds of pantries report that they limit the frequency with which households can obtain food (Ohls et al. 2001).

Only 4 percent of pantry respondents say they were unable to obtain food because the pantry was closed on weekdays, and only 2 percent say they were unable to obtain food because the pantry was closed on weekends. According to the provider survey, three-tenths of pantries distribute food five or more days per week, and three-fifths are open for four hours or less each day. However, in an emergency, four-fifths of pantries will make food available when they are normally closed (Ohls et al. 2001).

The vast majority of respondents (88 percent) offer only one reason for not being able to get food from a pantry when they needed it. One-fifth (22 percent) of respondents say they were often unable to get food when they needed it from a pantry. At the same time, more than half (53 percent) report that they were unable to get food only once or rarely, suggesting that this is not a frequent problem among individuals who live in an area that is served by one or more pantries.[10]

F. RESPONDENT SATISFACTION WITH PANTRY PROVIDERS

Pantries distribute groceries, including canned goods, rice, cereals, bread, and sometimes fresh fruit or meat, to respondents for off-site use. Donations from food banks and/or similar

[10]The survey of EFAS clients does not enable us to measure the number of individuals that live in areas that are not served by at least one pantry.

nonprofit organizations and community food drives are the most frequent sources of these commodities. Pantries might also receive donations or purchase food from farmers and growers, as well as supermarkets, wholesalers, manufacturers, caterers, and restaurants to help fill their shelves. Some have refrigeration and freezer storage available, while others can store only non-perishable food items. Because pantries might be limited by what they receive through donations as well as by what they are capable of storing, providing an adequate amount of food, as well as a good variety of food could present a challenge.

The survey of pantry respondents included two measures of respondent satisfaction with emergency food assistance: (1) satisfaction with the *amount* of food received from the respondent's EFAS provider and (2) satisfaction with the *variety* of food received from the respondent's EFAS provider. In addition, the survey asked respondents about their perceptions of any religious activities the provider might offer.

1. Level of Satisfaction with the Amount and Variety of Food Received

At the time of their visit, pantry respondents were asked whether they were "very satisfied", "somewhat satisfied", "somewhat dissatisfied", or "very dissatisfied" with the food items they received in terms of both the amount of food and variety of food. The vast majority of respondents report satisfaction with both the amount and variety of food they received at pantries (95 percent and 94 percent, respectively; table III.11). About two-thirds of respondents are "very satisfied" with the amount of food they receive, and a similar fraction is "very satisfied" with the variety of food available through the pantry.[11]

[11]Table D.5 in appendix D indicates how pantry client satisfaction varies by race/ethnicity and sex.

TABLE III.11

PANTRY CLIENTS' SATISFACTION WITH EFAS PROVIDER'S FOOD

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
Amount of Food (n = 2,296)	68.7	2.56	26.7	2.17	3.0	0.65	1.6	0.42
Variety of Food (n = 2,317)	65.0	2.26	28.5	1.69	4.7	0.78	1.8	0.45

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

2. Respondent Perceptions of Faith-Based Activities

About three-fifths of pantry respondents received services from providers affiliated with a religious organization. Providers with a religious affiliation might be expected to be more likely than non-religious providers to ask pantry respondents to participate in religious activities, such as attendance at religious services before receiving food. The proportion of respondents who report that they were asked to participate in prayers or other religious activities was about twice as high for officially "faith-based" providers (18 percent) as opposed to "non-religious" providers (9 percent, table III.12). Of respondents asked to participate in religious activities, 69 percent describe themselves as "very comfortable" with these activities; 20 percent describe themselves as "somewhat comfortable," and 11 percent describe themselves as "somewhat uncomfortable" or "very uncomfortable."

Among respondents who report that they are asked to participate in religious activities, three-quarters report that they do *not* share a religious affiliation with the provider (data not shown). Respondents' comfort level with religious activities offered by the provider is not dramatically different for respondents unaffiliated with the religion of the provider than for

TABLE III.12

PANTRY CLIENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROVIDER-SPONSORED RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

	Frequency for All Clients		Frequency for Clients of Religious Providers		Frequency for Clients of Non-Religious Providers	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
Clients asked to participate in prayers or other religious activities (n = 2,344)	13.7	1.78	17.5	1.94	9.3	2.99
Among clients asked to participate in religious activities (n = 356):						
Feel very comfortable with religious activities	68.9	4.08	67.2	5.11	72.6	4.82
Feel somewhat comfortable with religious activities	19.8	3.46	21.2	3.54	16.7	5.49
Feel somewhat uncomfortable with religious activities	6.5	2.95	9.4	3.87	0.3	0.24
Feel very uncomfortable with activities	4.8	1.93	2.2	1.20	10.5	3.15
Clients who perceive their provider as secular or having a different religious affiliation than their own (n =2,340)	88.5	1.40	85.1	1.91	92.5	2.04
Among clients perceiving their provider as secular or having a different religious affiliation than their own (n = 1,978):						
Clients asked to participate in prayers or other religious activities	11.5	1.60	16.0	2.39	6.7	1.79
Among clients asked to participate in religious activities by a provider seen as secular or having a different religious affiliation (n = 265):						
Feel very comfortable with religious activities	64.3	4.43	64.0	5.58	65.2	8.23
Feel somewhat comfortable with religious activities	23.4	3.91	25.1	4.85	19.1	4.15
Feel somewhat uncomfortable with religious activities	6.1	3.51	8.5	4.68	0.0	--
Feel very uncomfortable with religious activities	6.2	2.82	2.4	1.46	15.8	6.52
SAMPLE SIZE	2,344		1,517		827	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

respondents as a whole. These findings suggests that *either* religious activities offered by pantry providers are not perceived as objectionable by most clients, *or* that the clients who are present at pantries that ask them to participate in religious activities are those who may be more likely to be comfortable with such activities.

G. FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

Several government food assistance programs can function as important sources of food for low-income households. These programs include the Food Stamp Program (FSP), the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and additional programs for senior citizens (including Meals-on-Wheels)[12] and for children in child care centers or Head Start programs. In this section, we consider both the participation of pantry household members in these programs, and the reasons why households do not participate in programs for which they appear eligible.[13]

1. Participation in Food Assistance Programs

About one-third (32 percent) of pantry respondents are in households that have not received assistance from any public food assistance program during the last year.[14] Another one-third (32

[12]Many senior meals programs are funded through the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP), formerly known as the Nutrition Program for the Elderly (NPE).

[13]The measurement of program eligibility was based on the demographic, income, and asset information gathered by the survey, but was imprecise because of item non-response and possible changes in household composition, income, or assets over the course of the past year. Appendix C describes how program eligibility was estimated based on household characteristics.

[14]By "public food assistance program", we refer to any of the seven programs mentioned above: the FSP, WIC, the SBP, the NSLP, the SFSP, senior meals programs, and nutrition programs for children in child care centers or Head Start Programs.

percent) are in households that have received assistance from only one program, and the remaining one-third (36 percent) are in households that have received assistance from multiple programs (table III.13). Among households with members eligible for at least one government food assistance program, four-fifths have participated in at least one program, while one-fifth (19 percent) have not participated in any program. Among pantry households with members eligible for multiple programs, more than half (55 percent) have received assistance from more than one program.

Among specific government food assistance programs, the FSP was most widely used; almost half (48 percent) of pantry clients report some FSP participation in their household during the last year. About 32 percent of pantry clients report household members' participation in the NSLP during the last year, and 28 percent of pantry clients report participation in the SBP. The proportion of clients reporting household members' participation in each of the other programs is much lower: 13 percent for WIC, 8 percent for the SFSP, and 4 percent each for Meals-on-Wheels or senior meals programs and for meals offered through a child care center or Head Start program.[15]

Among pantry client households that appear eligible for assistance through particular government food assistance programs, participation rates of household members vary considerably by program. Eighty-four percent of households with members eligible for the National School Lunch Program report NSLP participation during the last year, and 73 percent of households eligible for the School Breakfast Program report SBP participation during the last

[15]Table D.6 in appendix D indicates how food assistance program participation patterns vary by frequency of pantry use.

TABLE III.13

PARTICIPATION OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS IN FEDERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS BY FOOD PANTRY CLIENTS

Participation in Food Assistance Programs in the Last Year[a]	Households of All Pantry Clients		Seemingly Eligible Households[b,c]	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
No Programs	31.5	2.87	19.3	2.40
One Program	32.1	2.06	25.5	1.61
Two or More Programs	36.4	2.11	55.2	2.33
Food Stamp Program (FSP)	48.0	4.36	54.9	4.17
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	13.0	0.98	61.3	2.92
Meals in Child Care Food Program or Head Start	4.2	1.06	19.4	4.83
School Breakfast Program (SBP)	28.0	2.19	72.6	3.18
National School Lunch Program (NSLP)	32.3	2.16	83.6	1.90
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	8.4	1.15	21.4	3.26
Meals-on-Wheels or Senior Meals Program	4.2	0.75	14.1	2.34
SAMPLE SIZE	2,371			

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

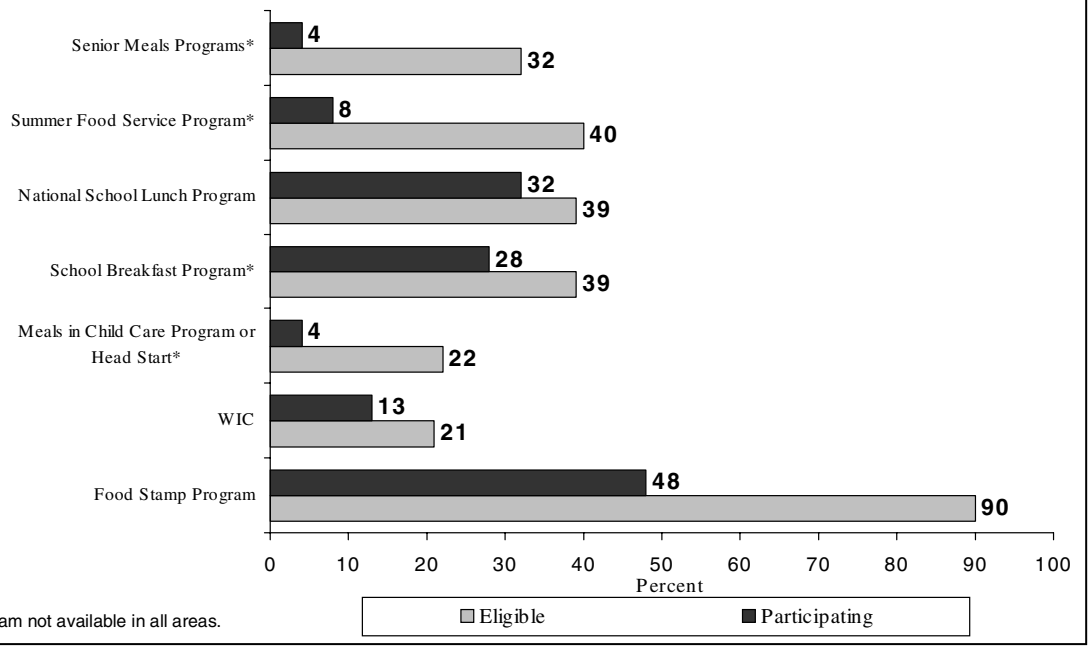
NOTE: The percent of eligible cases out of all pantry household clients, except the cases with unknown program eligibility, are: FSP: 90%; WIC: 21%; Meals in Child Care Program or Head Start: 22%; SBP: 39%; NSLP: 39%; SFSP: 40%; Meals-on-Wheels or Senior Meals Program: 32%.

[a]Participation in the last year does not necessarily mean that the household participated in the last month.
[b]When program participation is not reported, seemingly eligible households are identified by income/resources (FSP program), income/household characteristics (WIC, NSLP, SBP), or household characteristics only (remaining programs).
[c]Sample size varies by program.

year.[16] Three-fifths (61 percent) of households with members eligible for WIC report WIC participation during the last year. Although more pantry households participate in the Food Stamp Program than in any other government food assistance program, the participation rate of eligible pantry households in the FSP was only 55 percent, similar to the national FSP participation rate of 59 percent in 2000 (Cunnyngham 2002).

FIGURE III.3

ELIGIBILITY FOR, AND PARTICIPATION IN, FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AMONG ALL PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



*Program not available in all areas.

Participation rates of eligible household members in the remaining government food assistance programs are estimated to be well under one-half for each program, which may

[16]In calculating these participation rates, we have included all seemingly eligible pantry users in the denominator. Some programs, including the senior meals programs, the SFSP, the SBP, and meals in child care programs or Head Start, are not available at all locations, and so some non-participants may not have effective access to them. We lack sufficient reliable data to take this into account.

indicate a lack of the availability of these programs in some areas of the country. Only 21 percent of households with members potentially eligible for the Summer Food Service Program report SFSP participation during the last year. (The survey did not inquire whether children are participating in summer programs, so this rate includes all households with children.) Only one-fifth (19 percent) of households potentially eligible for nutrition benefits through a child care center or Head Start program report that members received such benefits. (The survey did not inquire whether children are enrolled in child care or Head Start, so this rate includes all households with young children.) Only 14 percent of households eligible for nutrition benefits through Meals-on-Wheels or some other senior meals program report receiving such benefits. The survey did not gather information on whether child care or elderly feeding programs are available in the regions where EFAS clients live.

2. Reasons for Non-Participation in Food Assistance Programs

The Food Stamp Program is the linchpin of the U.S. nutrition safety net, and is by far the largest of the government food assistance programs available to most citizens in need. Among pantry respondents in seemingly eligible households who have not received food stamps during the last year (45 percent of all seemingly eligible pantry households), 77 percent have not applied for the FSP in the last year, while 7 percent have applied and been turned down and 16 percent are currently applying for food stamps (table III.14). About half of those turned down are reapplying (4 out of 7 percent).

Approximately one in 10 seemingly eligible pantry households (11 percent) is not currently participating in the FSP, but has participated in the last 12 months. More than half (53 percent) of these households have used food stamps within the last 12 months and are currently reapplying. Twelve percent have applied for food stamps during the last year, been

TABLE III.14

REASONS NOT CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING IN THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM (FSP)
(Seemingly Eligible Pantry Client Households Not Currently Participating)

	Percentage of Subgroup	(SE)
Households with No FSP Participation in the Last Year		
As a percentage of all seemingly eligible pantry households (n = 2,051)	45.1	4.17
Application for the FSP in the last 12 months (n = 953[a])		
Did not apply for food stamps	76.9	1.84
Applied for food stamps, were turned down and are reapplying	4.2	0.88
Applied for food stamps, were turned down and are not reapplying	3.2	0.60
Currently applying for food stamps	15.8	2.10
Reasons Application for FSP Was Turned Down (n = 90[b,c])		
Income was too high	59.4	7.39
Missing paperwork	10.5	6.03
Too many assets	7.4	4.51
Work requirements were not satisfied	6.2	2.82
Citizenship status	2.6	1.33
Value of car was too high	2.6	1.78
Barriers to Applying for Food Stamps/Never Applied (n = 796[c,d])		
Don't think they qualify, sanctioned, lost eligibility, or doubtful of eligibility	46.8	4.95
Prefer not to receive welfare/help from government	8.8	1.85
Too much paperwork/can't fill out forms	8.2	1.59
Small benefits not worth the effort	8.2	2.18
No longer need food stamps	6.4	1.62
Do not know about FSP or how to get benefits	5.1	2.18
Do not have transportation to Food Stamp office	4.9	1.20
Feelings of embarrassment/discomfort	4.6	1.27
Questions too personal	1.2	0.54
Food Stamp office hours are inconvenient	1.0	0.47
Negative attitudes of Food Stamp office staff	0.8	0.45
Households Not Currently Participating in the FSP, but Participated in the Last Year		
As a percentage of all seemingly eligible pantry households (n = 2,051)	10.8	1.69
Participation in FSP in the last 12 months (n = 208[e])		
Have used food stamps in the last 12 months and are currently reapplying for the program	53.3	5.51
Have used food stamps in the last 12 months and are not currently reapplying for the program	46.7	5.51

TABLE III.14 (*continued*)

	Percentage of Subgroup	(SE)
Application for the FSP in the last 12 months (n = 208[e])		
Applied for food stamps in the last 12 months, were turned down, and are reapplying	12.1	4.44
Applied for food stamps in the last 12 months, were turned down, and are not reapplying	13.8	4.55
Applied for food stamps, and not turned down	74.2	7.60
Reasons Application for FSP Was Turned Down for Those Who Lost Food Stamps in the Last Year, Reapplied and Were Turned Down (n = 53[c,f])		
Income was too high	54.6	8.83
Missing paperwork	28.3	8.28
Work requirements were not satisfied	8.4	5.27
Too many assets	1.9	1.39
Citizenship status	6.1	4.84
Value of car was too high	0.0	--
Barriers to Applying for/Receiving Food Stamps If Not Turned Down (n = 130[c,g])		
Don't think they qualify, sanctioned, lost eligibility, or doubtful of eligibility	41.8	5.89
Feelings of embarrassment/discomfort	10.4	7.33
No longer need food stamps	4.8	2.81
Too much paperwork/can't fill out forms	3.8	2.79
Do not have transportation to Food Stamp office	1.1	0.59
Small benefits not worth the effort	0.7	0.52
Prefer not to receive welfare/help from government	0.5	0.45
Negative attitudes of Food Stamp office staff	0.2	0.17

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: Sample for all tabulations is limited to seemingly eligible households not currently participating in FSP.

N/A = not applicable

[a]Base is all seemingly eligible households with no participation in the FSP in the last year.

[b]Base is households in previous panel who had applied for food stamps in the last year and were turned down.

[c]Multiple responses were allowed, but responses with very low frequency are not reported.

[d]Base is all seemingly eligible households not receiving food stamps in the previous year who have not applied for food stamps in the last year, and do not have plans in the near future to apply.

[e]Base is all seemingly eligible households that participated in the last year, but that are not currently receiving food stamps.

[f]Base is all seemingly eligible households that are not currently receiving food stamps, but have received food stamps during the past year, stopped receiving them and were turned down when they reapplied for the FSP.

[g]Base is all seemingly eligible households that are not currently receiving food stamps, but have received them in the last year and have not had an FSP application turned down in the last year.

turned down, and are reapplying, and another 14 percent were similarly turned down and are not reapplying.

The most common reason pantry respondents who have had an FSP application turned down in the past year give for being turned down is that their income is too high (59 percent of respondents with no FSP participation in the last year, 55 percent of respondents who are not currently participating in the FSP, but have participated in the past year). This reason for denial of benefits affects about six percent of all seemingly eligible pantry households that not currently participating in the FSP. The second most common reason for denial is missing paperwork (11 percent and 28 percent, respectively), which affects about two percent of all seemingly eligible pantry households that are not currently participating in the FSP.

When asked what barriers they face in applying for or receiving food stamps, 47 percent of pantry respondents with no FSP participation in the past year who have never applied for food stamps cite either doubts about their eligibility, loss of eligibility, or previous sanctions, as the most common barriers to FSP participation. Among pantry client households who are not currently participating in the FSP but have participated in the past year and have not had an FSP application turned down, 42 percent cite either doubts about their eligibility, loss of eligibility, or previous sanctions, as the most common barriers to FSP participation. These barriers to current FSP participation are reported by 35 percent of all seemingly eligible pantry households that are not currently receiving food stamps.

Pantry clients were also asked why household members did not participate in each of four child nutrition programs during the last year: WIC, the SBP, the NSLP, and the SFSP. For WIC

TABLE III.15

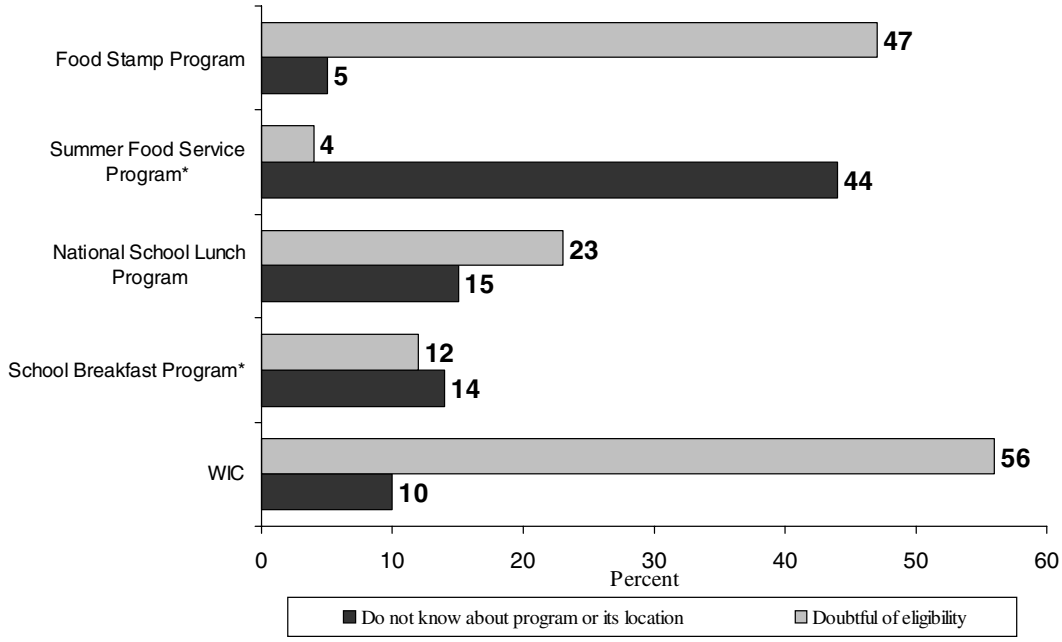
REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS AMONG SEEMINGLY ELIGIBLE BUT NON-PARTICIPATING PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS
(Percentages of Adult Respondents Indicating Given Reason)

Reason for Non-Participation	Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)		School Breakfast Program (SBP)		National School Lunch Program (NSLP)		Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
Doubtful of eligibility	56.4	5.17	12.0	3.43	22.8	5.29	4.1	1.31
Do not know about program or its Location	10.1	2.78	13.8	4.01	14.9	4.79	43.7	4.01
Program unavailable in school/ Area	0.0	--	16.8	5.47	9.4	3.99	20.7	3.72
Do not know how to participate or how to get benefits	4.7	1.74	2.6	1.64	5.2	2.9	5.4	1.45
Difficulty filling out forms	1.8	1.54	1.1	1.04	2.2	1.77	0.3	0.34
Lack transportation to program or office hours inconvenient	1.1	0.58	3.7	2.41	0.0	--	3.4	0.78
Feelings of embarrassment or Discomfort	2.9	2.49	3.6	1.42	5.9	2.28	0.5	0.25
Not worth the trouble	3.9	2.13	0.0	--	0.0	--	1.7	0.92
Do not like food that is served	0.0	--	5.9	2.18	13.1	4.7	0.9	0.37
Do not eat meal at that time of Day	0.0	--	4.7	1.99	0.0	--	0.0	--
Eat meal at home or from other sources of support	2.3	1.26	32.9	5.94	13.4	3.77	5.4	1.29
SAMPLE SIZE	169		219		129		540	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

FIGURE III.4

REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AMONG ELIGIBLE PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



Note: Base for FSP is seeming eligible households not participating in the last year. *Program not available in all areas.

and the NLSP, the most commonly cited reason is doubtfulness of eligibility, cited by 56 percent of respondents with household members seemingly eligible for WIC, and by 23 percent of respondents with household members seemingly eligible for the NSLP (table III.15, fig. III.4). In the case of the SBP, by contrast, one-third of pantry respondents with seemingly eligible household members report that they did not participate because their child ate breakfast at home. In the case of the SFSP, 44 percent of pantry respondents with seemingly eligible household members report that they were unaware of the program, a far higher percentage than for any of the other child nutrition programs. However, the SBP and the SFSP are not available in all areas.

H. CONTRASTING DIVERSE GROUPS OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS

By contrasting multiple groups of pantry client households, we can better understand the diversity of households served by the nation's food pantries. Comparing different groups of pantry client households also allows us to distinguish which households face the greatest hardships, as indicated by income and poverty levels, residential status, and household food security. Moreover, comparing program participation patterns of different groups of households can indicate which are most dependent on EFAS for food assistance and which have the most access to public food assistance programs. [17]

1. Households Defined by Demographic Characteristics

Nearly half (45 percent) of pantry households include children younger than 18, while one quarter includes elderly members (60 or older) but no children (table III.16).[18] The remaining 30 percent includes neither children nor elderly members.

As we would expect, pantry households with children are larger than other pantry households, averaging 4.3 persons compared with 1.7 per household for each of the groups of households without children (table III.16). Of the three types of households, those with elderly members (and no children) are the least likely to rely on workers for economic support. About 40 percent of pantry client households with children include at least one employed person. The proportions of households relying on cash welfare (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or General Assistance) are similar across the three groups.

[17]Appendix C describes the analytic methods we used to test for the statistical significance of differences between groups of households and to account for sample design effects.

[18]Of pantry households including children, 14 percent also include an elderly member (Table III.16).

TABLE III.16

HOUSEHOLD, INCOME, AND POVERTY CHARACTERISTICS OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

Characteristics	Group 1 Households with Children Under Age 18 (45% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households without Children but with Elderly (Age 60+) (25% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households with Neither Children or Elderly (30% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)
Household Characteristics						
Household includes elderly (%)	14.1[b,c]	1.94	100.0[a]	0.00	0.0[a]	--
Persons per household	4.3[b,c]	0.09	1.7[a]	0.08	1.7[a]	0.08
Household with workers (%)	39.5[b,c]	4.00	11.1[a,c]	2.00	18.8[a,b]	2.51
Household with cash welfare (%)	41.4	4.76	51.8	4.61	43.1	3.93
Income and Poverty						
Monthly cash income ($)	889[b,c]	43.4	775[a,c]	52.2	628[a,b]	33.5
Monthly income $\leq$ 130% of poverty (%)	94.5[b]	1.58	88.0[a]	3.07	93.0	1.70
Annual cash income ($)	13,636[b,c]	1,212.1	8,813[a]	452.1	8,143[a]	486.2
Annual income $\leq$ 50% of poverty (%)	52.6[b]	4.48	31.3[a,c]	5.09	43.7[b]	2.71
Annual income 51-100% of poverty (%)	30.4[b,c]	3.38	59.8[a,c]	4.55	45.5[a,b]	3.92
Annual income 101-130% of poverty (%)	9.9[c]	3.10	5.6	1.68	4.2[a]	1.38
Annual income > 130% of poverty (%)	7.1	1.80	3.3	1.61	6.6	1.77
Sample Size	1,101		570		694	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]Significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]Significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

Monthly and annual incomes are highest for pantry households with children and lowest for pantry households with neither children nor elderly members (table III.16). Because households with children contain more members than households with elderly members, they are more likely to have been at or below 130 percent of the poverty level in the last month and more likely to have been in extreme poverty (at or below 50 percent of the poverty level) during the last year. Compared with households without elderly members or children, those with elderly members are more likely to be eligible for Social Security and SSI benefits, which helps to explain their higher monthly income levels and lower incidence of extreme poverty.

Consistent with their lower incidence of extreme poverty, households with elderly members and no children are more likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling than are other types of pantry households (table III.17, fig. III.5). In contrast, pantry clients living with neither children nor elderly members are significantly more likely to be homeless than are other pantry clients and are significantly less likely to be food secure. Nearly three-fifths (58 percent) of pantry households without children or elderly members experience food insecurity with hunger, compared with two-fifths of pantry households with children and one-quarter of pantry households with elderly members and no children.

Households with elderly members and no children are less likely than other pantry households to report problems with welfare or the Food Stamp Program (table III.17). Contributing factors to fewer problems with the FSP are: low rates of work participation, steady incomes, and lower levels of FSP participation. Pantry households with elderly members are less likely to report the receipt of FSP benefits during the last year, although the proportion of households eligible for the FSP is similar across groups. Nearly all (92 percent) pantry households with children receive assistance from such public food assistance programs as the

TABLE III.17

RESIDENTIAL STATUS, FOOD SECURITY, AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

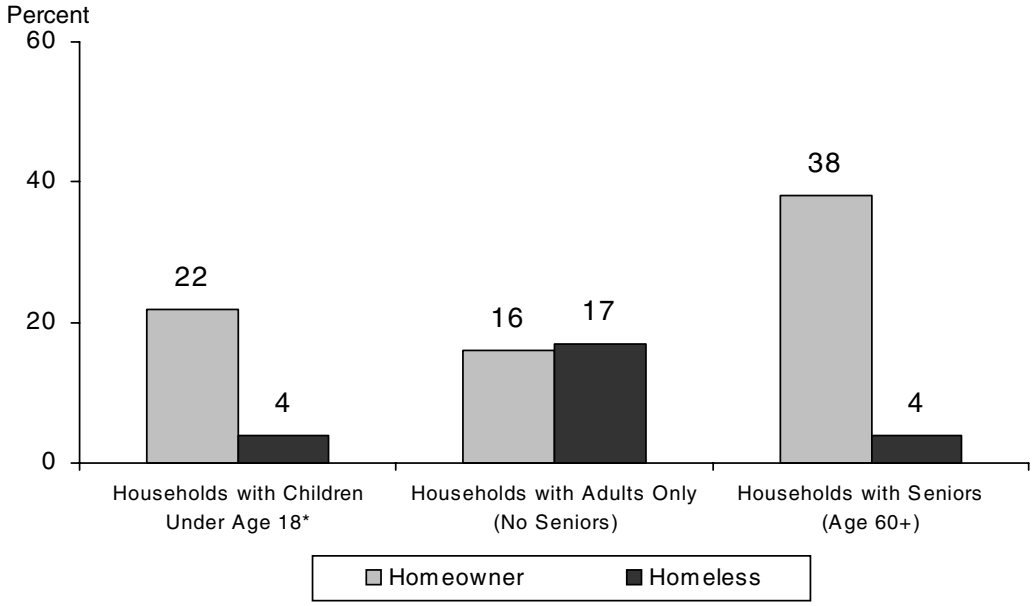
Characteristics	Group 1 Households with Children under Age 18 (45% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households without Children but with Elderly (Age 60+) (25% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households with Neither Children or Elderly (30% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)
Residential and Food Security Status						
Household member owns residence (%)	21.8[b]	3.29	38.2[a,c]	4.26	16.3[b]	2.97
Homeless respondent (%)	4.3[c]	1.22	3.6[c]	1.39	17.0[a,b]	3.84
Food secure (%)	20.4[c]	3.03	30.9[c]	4.71	13.2[a,b]	2.33
Food insecure (%)	79.6[c]	3.03	69.1[c]	4.71	86.8[a,b]	2.33
Food insecure without hunger (%)	40.0[c]	2.34	44.6[c]	4.01	28.6[a,b]	3.43
Food insecure with hunger (%)	39.6[b,c]	2.05	24.5[a,c]	2.51	58.2[a,b]	3.80
Program Participation						
Problems with FSP or welfare reported (%)	39.8[b]	2.68	24.6[a,c]	3.29	40.0[b]	3.06
HH includes FSP recipients (%)	53.7[b]	4.89	33.0[a,c]	4.79	50.2[b]	4.74
HH includes eligible non-recipients of the FSP (%)	36.5[b]	3.53	47.8[a,c]	4.55	36.3[b]	3.10
HH members are ineligible for the FSP (%)	6.8[b]	1.45	13.9[a]	3.10	10.3	2.11
HH members' FSP eligibility is uncertain (%)	3.1	1.14	5.2	1.76	3.2	1.10
HH members rely on public food assistance (%)	91.5[b,c]	1.17	46.8[a]	4.68	51.3[a]	4.59
HH members rely on pantries, kitchens, and/or shelters (%)	22.0[c]	2.81	22.0[c]	4.27	36.7[a,b]	4.44
HH members rely on pantries only (%)	6.9[b,c]	1.14	41.9[a]	5.45	30.6[a]	3.18
Sample Size	1,101		570		694	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]Significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]Significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

FIGURE III.5

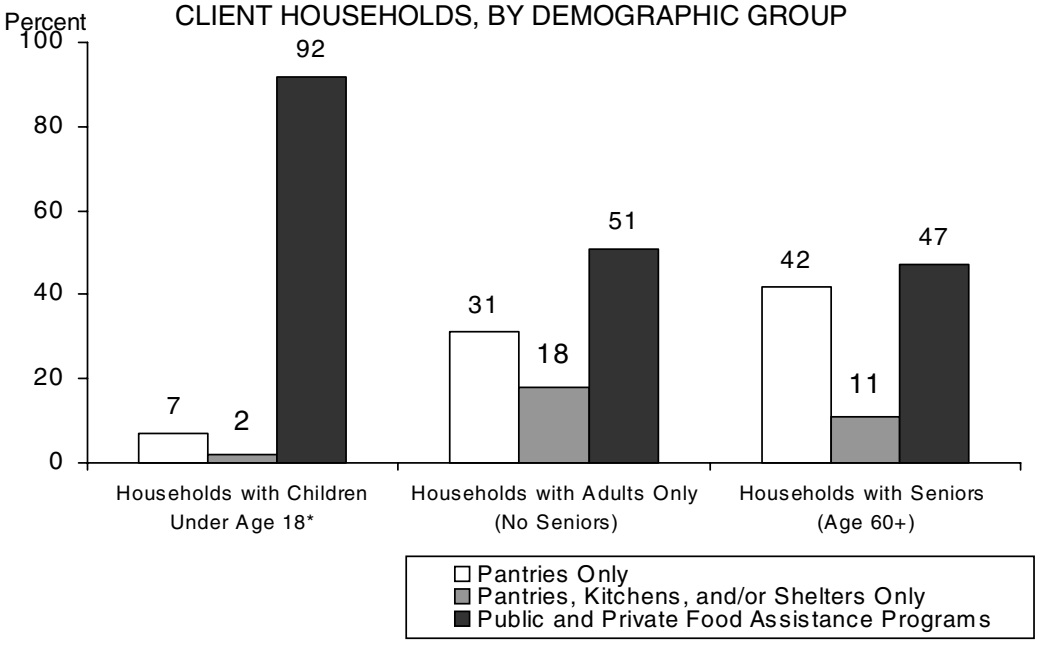
RESIDENTIAL STATUS OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP



*14 percent of pantry households with children also have seniors.

FIGURE III.6

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP



*14 percent of pantry client households with children also have seniors.
Note: Categories may not add to 100 due to rounding. Food assistance categories are mutually exclusive.

FSP, WIC, School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, or child care or senior meals programs (fig. III.6). Households with neither children nor elderly members are more likely than other pantry households to rely not on public food assistance programs but on other sources of EFAS, such as shelters and soup kitchens. This finding is consistent with the higher incidence of homelessness among this group of pantry households.

2. Households Defined by Participation in EFAS and Public Food Assistance Programs

More than two-thirds (69 percent) of pantry households rely on one or more of the public food assistance programs listed above for food assistance (table III.18, fig. III.7). Only 9 percent of pantry households rely on multiple sources of EFAS (such as shelters or soup kitchens in addition to food pantries) but not on public food assistance programs.[19] About one-fifth (22 percent) of pantry households rely only on EFAS pantries.

Not surprisingly, households using public food assistance programs—many of which are targeted at children—are much more likely to include children than are other pantry households (table III.18). Pantry households using public food assistance programs are larger on average than are other pantry households (3.3 persons per household versus 2.0 persons per household). Households relying only on EFAS pantries are more likely to include elderly members than other pantry households, while pantry households relying on multiple forms of EFAS are most likely to include neither children nor elderly members.

[19]As shown later in Table III.19, 26 percent of pantry client households using public food assistance programs also use two or more forms of private food assistance.

TABLE III.18

HOUSEHOLD, INCOME, AND POVERTY CHARACTERISTICS OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

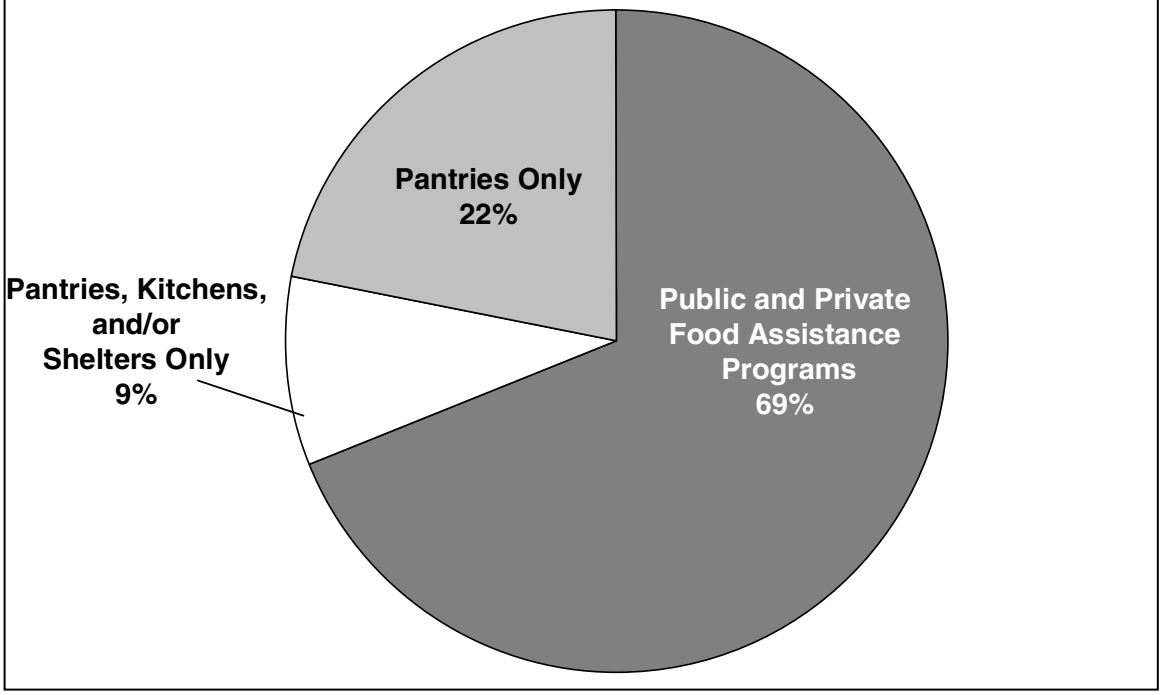
Characteristics	Group 1 Households Using Public and Private Food Assistance Programs (69% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households Using Pantries, Kitchens, and/or Shelters Only (9% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households Using Pantries Only (22% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)
Household Characteristics						
Household includes children (%)	60.9[b,c]	2.81	8.3[a]	2.65	14.0[a]	2.60
Household includes elderly (%)	25.1[c]	2.20	32.8	6.54	47.9[a]	4.67
Household has neither children nor elderly (%)	24.4[b,c]	2.44	62.0[a,c]	5.97	41.8[a,b]	3.70
Persons per household	3.3[b,c]	0.13	2.0[a]	0.13	2.0[a]	0.10
Household with workers (%)	27.6	3.24	20.6	4.46	24.9	3.65
Household with cash welfare (%)	49.7[c]	3.66	35.3	7.48	34.1[a]	3.78
Income and Poverty						
Monthly cash income ($)	770	37.2	681[c]	62.1	823[b]	46.5
Monthly income ≤ 130% of poverty (%)	96.2[b,c]	1.06	89.2[a]	3.18	84.8[a]	3.01
Annual cash income ($)	10,607[b]	875.2	8,022[a,c]	822.1	12,593[b]	1,271.7
Annual income ≤ 50% of poverty (%)	49.3[c]	3.07	52.4[c]	5.87	25.2[a,b]	3.65
Annual income 51-100% of poverty (%)	39.9[c]	3.97	36.9[c]	5.64	52.5[a,b]	3.51
Annual income 101-130% of poverty (%)	6.7	2.11	3.8[c]	2.24	10.0[b]	2.02
Annual income > 130% of poverty (%)	4.0[c]	1.33	7.0	2.44	12.3[a]	2.92
Sample Size	1,531		224		592	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]Significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]Significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

FIGURE III.7

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



Households using only EFAS pantries tend to have higher levels of monthly and annual income than households using multiple forms of EFAS and are less likely than either other type of household to have been in extreme poverty during the last year (table III.18). By not seeking assistance from any other EFAS or public food assistance program, these households may indicate that they face fewer hardships than other pantry client households. In contrast, households relying on public food assistance programs are more likely than are other pantry households to have monthly incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level. Households with incomes below this threshold meet the gross income requirement for participation in the FSP and for the receipt of free school breakfasts and lunches.

TABLE III.19

RESIDENTIAL STATUS, FOOD SECURITY, AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

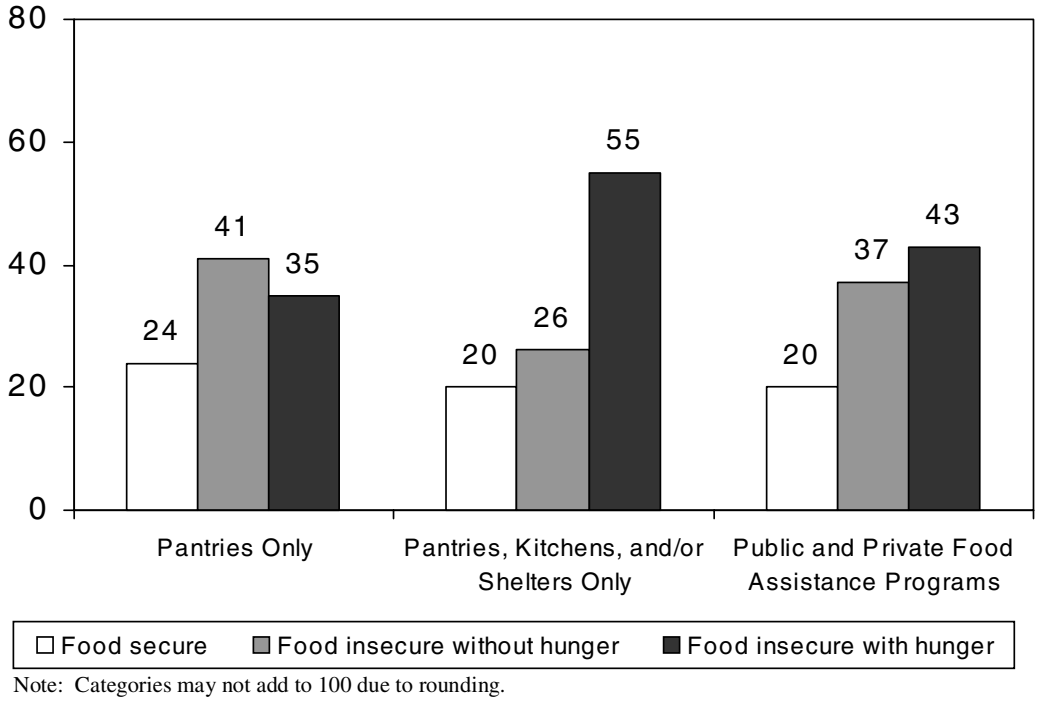
Characteristics	Group 1 Households Using Public and Private Food Assistance Programs (69% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households Using Pantries, Kitchens, and/or Shelters Only (9% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households Using Pantries Only (22% of Pantry HHs) Mean	(SE)
Residential and Food Security Status						
Household member owns residence (%)	21.4[c]	2.65	14.9[c]	3.74	34.1[a,b]	4.23
Homeless respondent (%)	6.5[b]	1.78	22.3[a,c]	4.80	7.5[b]	2.04
Food secure (%)	20.1	2.49	19.8	3.69	24.1	3.66
Food insecure (%)	79.9	2.49	80.2	3.69	75.9	3.66
Food insecure without hunger (%)	37.2[b]	1.93	25.7[a,c]	4.19	41.4[b]	3.46
Food insecure with hunger (%)	42.7[b,c]	2.17	54.5[a,c]	4.22	34.5[a,b]	3.34
Program Participation						
Problems with FSP or welfare reported (%)	39.4[c]	3.07	42.7[c]	5.93	25.1[a,b]	2.63
HH includes FSP recipients (%)	70.8[b,c]	4.53	0.0	--	0.0	--
HH includes eligible non-recipients of the FSP (%)	22.7[b,c]	3.50	73.7[a]	3.99	74.9[a]	2.91
HH members are ineligible for the FSP (%)	4.7[b,c]	1.08	18.6[a]	4.04	21.7[a]	2.73
HH members' FSP eligibility is uncertain (%)	1.9	0.79	7.6	3.14	3.4	0.99
HH members rely on pantries, kitchens, and/or shelters (%)	25.7[b,c]	3.12	100.0[a]	0.00	0.0[a]	--
Sample Size	1,531		222		592	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]Significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]Significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

FIGURE III.8

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND FOOD SECURITY OF PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



Note: Categories may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Of all three groups defined by public and private program participation, clients relying only on pantries are the most likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling, while clients relying on multiple forms of private food assistance (and no public programs) are the most likely to be homeless (table III.19). Further confirming this intuition, the prevalence of food insecurity with hunger varies dramatically by group: more than half (55 percent) of households relying on multiple forms of EFAS are food insecure with hunger, compared with about two-fifths (43 percent) of pantry households using public food assistance programs and 35 percent of households relying only on pantries (fig. III.8). Taken together with the group differences in income and poverty levels, these findings suggest pantry households using public food assistance programs face fewer material hardships than pantry households relying only on multiple forms of

private food assistance but face more material hardships than households relying only on pantries.

The higher level of hardship experienced by pantry users who rely on multiple forms of EFAS may reflect the fact that this is a group that uses shelters and kitchens. The underlying differences seen in table III.19 may not be due to multiple EFAS use per se, but rather to kitchen and shelter clients in general being more likely to experience material hardship.

Given the hardships of pantry households using multiple forms of EFAS, policymakers may want to consider ways to expand participation of these households in public food assistance programs. While 74 percent of these households appear to be eligible for the FSP, 43 percent experienced problems receiving FSP or welfare benefits, and many do not consider themselves eligible for the FSP. Pantry client households using multiple forms of private food assistance have, relative to the poverty level, a similar distribution of annual income as have pantry client households using public food assistance programs. Nonetheless, the proportion of FSP-eligible households considering themselves ineligible for food stamps is twice as high for households using multiple forms of private food assistance (49 percent) as for households using public food assistance programs (22 percent—data not shown). Given the high proportion of eligible households considering themselves ineligible for the FSP, educating pantry clients on the eligibility standards for the FSP and other public food assistance programs could help increase needy individuals' participation in these programs.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF KITCHEN CLIENTS

About 5,300 emergency kitchens provide food assistance to needy individuals across the United States. In this chapter we describe the characteristics of these individuals. While the client survey was of adults (age 18 and older) who visited emergency kitchens, it also gathered information on household characteristics, such as indicators of food security. We analyzed the survey data to infer patterns of emergency food utilization by kitchen clients, satisfaction with food offered at emergency kitchens, and household members' eligibility for, and participation in, federal food assistance programs.

A. NUMBERS OF CLIENTS SERVED BY EMERGENCY KITCHENS

We estimated weekly numbers of unique or different people (adults and children) served by emergency kitchens based on the numbers of clients observed at the kitchens we visited and on how often clients reported that they received meals at one or more emergency kitchens during a 7-day period that included the day of their interview. Based on these data, about 487,000 different adults received food from emergency kitchens during a typical week in 2001 (Table IV.1). About 163,000 children accompanied these adults and also received meals, resulting in a total of 650,000 persons served by emergency kitchens during a typical week in 2001.

Using information provided by respondents about how many weeks in a row they received meals from a kitchen, we estimated the number of unique kitchen clients during a month to facilitate comparison to the number of pantry clients during a month. About 856,000 adults and 275,000 children (or 1.1 million people total) visited emergency kitchens during a typical month in 2001.

TABLE IV.1

ESTIMATED NUMBERS OF DIFFERENT CLIENTS SERVED BY EMERGENCY KITCHENS WEEKLY AND MONTHLY IN 2001

	Weekly Number	Monthly Number
Total Persons (all ages)	650,000	1,131,000
Adults age 18 and older	487,000	856,000
Children under age 18	163,000	275,000

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: See Appendix A for details regarding the methods used to estimate unique numbers of clients.

As described more fully in Appendix A, the estimates are derived from sampling probabilities and include adjustments for survey nonresponse and other factors relating to survey coverage. The estimates may be quite sensitive to a number of factors including sampling error, measurement error, non-coverage of small providers and providers who are open infrequently or on an 'emergency basis' only, and seasonality. (The latter factor results from the data collection having been limited to only approximately four months.) However, despite these limitations, we believe that the estimates provide the best estimates of the kitchen population which can be obtained from the available data, and that they represent a reasonably good approximation of the number of clients at emergency kitchens in a typical week and month.

The study design limits our ability to measure patterns of kitchen use over a year. As described earlier, data collection occurred during a 14-week period and while we collected a limited amount of data about clients' use of kitchens for the previous 12 months, space limitations on the instrument precluded obtaining all the data necessary to fully characterize annual usage. In addition, these data may contain considerable measurement error in clients'

abilities to accurately estimate the number of weeks in a row that they had visited one or more kitchens during the last year.

As noted with the pantry clients, the annual number cannot be derived by simply multiplying the monthly number by 12, which would assume that an entirely new set of clients is served each month, nor is it equal to the monthly number, which would assume that no new clients are served each month. Some indication of the potential range of possible numbers of different clients annually can be derived by examining the implications of alternative estimates of turnover in the system, where we define turnover as the average percentage of the clientele which is "new" each month in the sense of not having used a kitchen in the previous 12 months.[1] If, to take a likely lower bound, we assume that this turnover rate is only 5 percent per month, this would imply that the annual number of different clients is 1.8 million. On the other hand, if we assume a monthly turnover rate of 9 percent of the caseload, this would imply that the annual number of different clients is 2.2 million.

This estimate of the annual number of kitchen clients (1.8 to 2.2 million people) is broadly comparable to that of 1.5 to 1.8 million clients in America's Second Harvest network. (For the Second Harvest estimate, see Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001, as modified by subsequent revisions which will be reflected in the final version). The potential reasons for the differences are similar to those noted in Chapter III with regard to pantries. The EFAS client survey's estimate of 1.8 to 2.2 million annual kitchen clients is much higher than that of 1.0 million kitchen clients from the

[1]About six percent of kitchen clients said that this was their 'first visit', suggesting that this was their 'first ever visit', however it is also likely that this may have been their first visit 'this week' or their 'first visit for this episode'. Thus, we believe that a weekly turnover rate of six percent is too high.

September 2000 CPS (Nord et al. 2002). The CPS does not include the homeless population in the U.S., which would underestimate the total number of kitchen clients.

B. CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS

The demographic and employment characteristics of emergency kitchen clients shed light on the reasons that these individuals seek food assistance. Many emergency kitchen clients report additional indicators of material hardship, such as homelessness, food insecurity and hunger, and lack of access to various amenities, including kitchen appliances, a working telephone, or a working motor vehicle.

1. Demographic Characteristics of Kitchen Clients

About 60 percent of emergency kitchen clients are male, and 71 percent are between 30 and 59 years old (Table IV.2). More than two-fifths (45 percent) of kitchen clients are non-Hispanic black; about one-third (35 percent) are non-Hispanic white; 14 percent are Hispanic; and 6 percent are in a different racial/ethnic group, including American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, or multiracial. The vast majority of clients (95 percent) report that they are U.S. citizens.

Sixty one percent of emergency kitchen clients are high school graduates or have completed a GED. Almost one-quarter (23 percent) have attended at least some college, and 9 percent have never attended high school. About 39 percent of kitchen clients have less than a high school education.

Fewer than one-fifth (18 percent) of kitchen clients report that they were married or living with a partner, while more than two-fifths (44 percent) report that they had never been married.

TABLE IV.2

SOCIOECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
OF ADULT EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

	Percent	(SE)
Age		
18 to 29 years	14.5	2.51
30 to 44 years	35.8	2.41
45 to 59 years	35.3	2.55
60 years and older	14.4	2.77
Gender		
Male	60.4	3.53
Female	39.6	3.53
Race/Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic white	35.4	4.67
Non-Hispanic black	44.8	4.18
Hispanic	13.8	2.30
Other	6.0	1.81
Marital Status		
Married	11.6	1.89
Living as married	6.7	0.98
Widowed	8.9	1.79
Divorced/separated	28.4	2.28
Never married	44.4	3.09
Educational Attainment		
Less than 8th grade	6.4	1.15
Completed 8th grade	3.0	0.56
Some high school	29.6	2.49
Graduated from high school	31.0	2.47
GED[a]	5.2	1.28
Trade school	1.4	0.45
Some college	19.3	2.51
Graduated from college	3.2	0.61
Post-graduate education	0.9	0.35
Self-Reported Health Status		
Excellent	13.9	1.52
Very good	18.9	1.94
Good	25.9	2.22
Fair	27.5	2.58
Poor	13.9	2.01
Citizenship		
U.S.	94.5	1.52
Non-U.S.	5.5	1.52
SAMPLE SIZE	2,424	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]The number of respondents obtaining a GED may be underestimated due to persons reporting "graduated from high school," regardless of whether a GED or high school diploma was obtained.

Almost 60 percent of emergency kitchen clients report that their health is "good," "very good," or "excellent." Approximately 40 percent of clients report that their health status is "fair" or "poor."

2. Employment Characteristics of Kitchen Clients

Only 16 percent of emergency kitchen clients report being employed (Table IV.3). About 39 percent of clients are looking for work but unemployed, and 45 percent are not in the labor force. Of those clients not in the labor force, three-quarters report that they are disabled, unable to work, or retired.

On average, employed kitchen clients work 33 hours per week. Half of the employed clients work 20 to 39 hours per week, and 40 percent work 40 or more hours per week. Of unemployed kitchen clients, 21 percent have been unemployed for less than a month, 52 percent have been unemployed for at least a month, but less than a year, and 27 percent have been employed for a year or more.

3. Residential Status of Kitchen Clients

About half of all adult emergency kitchen clients (52 percent) report renting their residence, and only 7 percent are homeowners (Table IV.4). One-third (36 percent) of emergency kitchen clients are homeless, and nearly 1 out of every 10 clients reported living outdoors.[2,3] The remaining 5 percent live in a residence for free, but do not consider themselves homeless. The

[2]We classified respondents as homeless if they considered themselves to be homeless, or if they reported living in a location not intended for permanent housing, such as a shelter/mission, car/van, abandoned building, public space/railroad station, or outdoors.

[3]Among America's Second Harvest network clients, 26 percent of kitchen clients considered themselves homeless (Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001).

TABLE IV.3

EMPLOYMENT-RELATED CHARACTERISTICS OF
ADULT EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

	Percent	(SE)
Employment Status		
Employed	16.0	2.00
Unemployed	38.9	3.52
Not in labor force		
Not looking for work	5.8	0.82
In a job training program	1.3	0.25
Disabled/unable to work	23.5	2.23
Retired	10.0	2.25
Homemaker	2.5	0.88
Student	2.0	1.08
Number of Hours Worked Per Week by Workers (mean) (n = 339)	32.6	1.23
Number of Hours Worked Per Week by Workers (n = 339)		
1 – 9	3.4	1.23
10 – 19	9.9	3.45
20 – 39	47.8	5.80
40 or more	38.9	5.31
Length of Unemployment/Time Spent Looking for Work (n = 1,219)		
Less than a month	21.2	3.16
1 to 3 months	32.8	2.15
4 to 6 months	15.0	2.00
7 to 11 months	4.1	0.92
12 to 23 months	9.9	1.42
24 months or more	16.9	2.38
SAMPLE SIZE	2,416	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE IV.4

RESIDENTIAL STATUS OF ADULT EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

	Reside in This Setting		Of Those Residing in This Setting, Percentage That Are Not Homeless: Own Residence		Rent Residence		Reside for Free		Are Homeless	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
All settings	100.0	0.00	7.1	1.60	52.0	3.57	4.6	0.85	36.2	4.17
House/condominium	22.5	3.12	26.9	4.71	53.4	5.42	10.1	2.57	9.5	3.25
Mobile Home	5.1	1.48	19.9	7.55	55.5	15.75	5.8	3.02	18.8	10.39
Apartment	34.6	3.67	0.1	0.13	91.2	1.52	3.5	1.10	5.2	1.28
Room	8.7	1.76	N/A	--	46.1	6.67	5.1	1.66	48.8	6.92
Hotel/Motel	2.6	1.27	N/A	--	62.9	11.85	15.6	14.31	21.5	5.60
Shelter/Mission	12.4	2.57	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100.0	0.00
Car/Van	2.7	0.92	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100.0	0.00
Abandoned Building	1.3	0.48	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100.0	0.00
Public Space/ Railroad Station	1.3	0.40	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100.0	0.00
Outside	8.8	1.43	N/A	--	N/A	--	N/A	--	100.0	0.00
SAMPLE SIZE	2,417		143		1,017		121		1,136	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

N/A = not applicable.

most common type of residence for kitchen clients is an apartment (35 percent of clients), followed by a house or condominium (23 percent), and by a shelter or mission (12 percent).

4. Household Characteristics of Kitchen Clients

The majority of emergency kitchen clients live alone (52 percent) and receive services from a provider in a metropolitan area (88 percent, Table IV.5). Of clients living alone, more than two times as many are male as are female. Sixteen percent of kitchen clients live in households that include at least four people, and the average household size—counting single person households—is 2.1 members. Twenty percent of kitchen clients live with children under the age of 18. Another twenty percent of kitchen clients live in households that include a person age 60 or older. About one-quarter (26 percent) of kitchen client households include employed persons, and one-third include recipients of cash welfare assistance.[4]

The vast majority of kitchen clients (96 percent) report that some or all of the members of their household are U.S. citizens. The other 4 percent report that no household members are U.S. citizens.

C. FOOD SECURITY

Food security is defined as "access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life" (Hamilton et al. 1997; Bickel et al. 2000, p. 6). Using the six-item short form to categorize food security for each household, we determined that three-fourths of emergency kitchen clients have been food insecure at some time during the 12 months preceding the interview (Table IV.6). One-fourth (27 percent) of kitchen clients have been food insecure

[4]That is, recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or General Assistance (GA).

TABLE IV.5

HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS OF ADULT
EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

Characteristic	Percent (Unless Otherwise Stated)	(SE)
Household Composition		
Single female respondent living alone	14.1	1.93
Single male respondent living alone	37.7	2.89
Single respondent living with children under the age of 18	11.4	1.38
Married/cohabiting respondent living with children under the age of 18	8.3	1.47
Married/cohabiting respondent living without children under the age of 18	10.0	1.42
Single respondent living with other adult(s)	18.4	2.19
Number of Household Members		
1	54.0	2.52
2	19.4	1.74
3	10.9	1.50
4	6.9	1.26
5	3.9	0.57
6 or more	4.9	0.91
Average number	2.1	0.08
Median number	1.0	0.00
Number of Children Under Age 18		
0	80.4	2.21
1	7.9	1.09
2	5.4	1.08
3	2.9	0.67
4 or more	3.3	0.91
Average number	0.4	0.07
Number of Household Members Age 60 or Older		
0	80.3	2.72
1	17.6	2.51
2	1.9	0.56
More than 2	0.2	0.13
Household contains member(s) who is/are employed	26.3	2.88
Proportion of household with cash welfare last month	33.5	3.17
Proportion of household with cash welfare and person employed	7.1	1.60
U.S. Citizenship		
No household members are citizens	3.6	1.44
Some household members are citizens	4.7	0.96
All household members are citizens	91.7	1.51

TABLE IV.5 (*continued*)

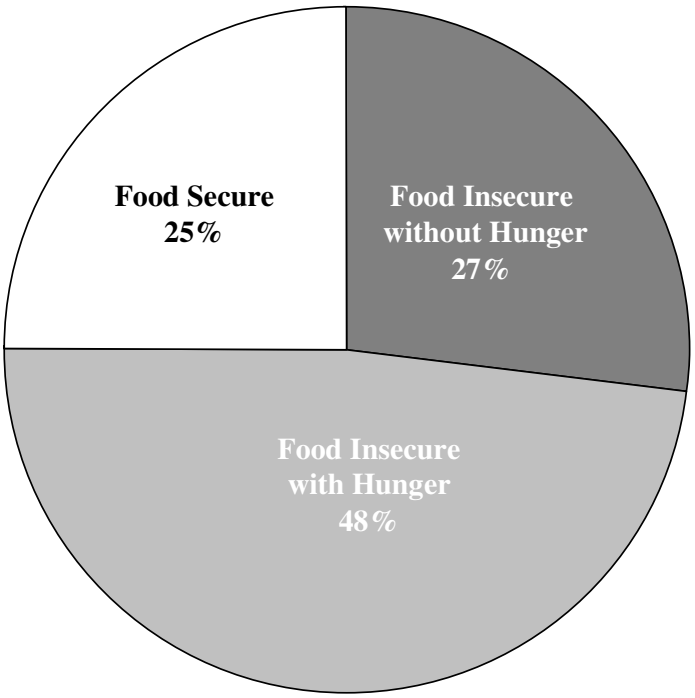
Characteristic	Percent (Unless Otherwise Stated)	(SE)
Metropolitan Status of Provider		
Metropolitan	88.4	5.28
Non-Metropolitan	11.6	5.28
Sample Size	2,425	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

without hunger, and one-half (48 percent) of kitchen clients have been food insecure with hunger (Figure IV.1).

FIGURE IV.1

FOOD SECURITY STATUS OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



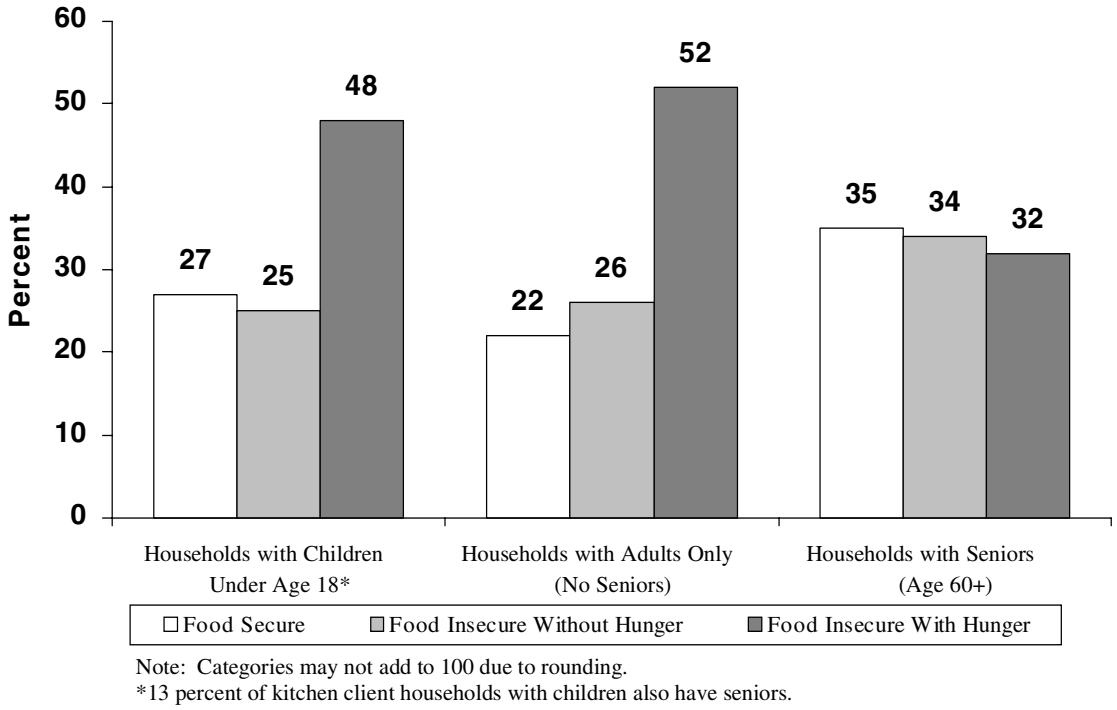
In addition to the six-item short form used to classify household food security, a seventh question on severe food-related hardship was asked since this is a vulnerable population. Responses to the seven individual food security questions are found in Appendix D. Two-fifths (41 percent; see Table D.7) of all kitchen client households report that one or more adult members did not eat for a whole day during the last year because of a lack of money for food. This is an indication of severe food-related hardship for a subset of kitchen client households.

While food insecurity is common among all household types, the prevalence and severity of food insecurity varies by household composition. About one-half (48 to 52 percent) of kitchen client households with children or with neither children or elderly persons are food insecure with

hunger, compared with only 32 percent for households with no children but at least one elderly person (Figure IV.2).[5]

FIGURE IV.2

FOOD SECURITY AND HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



Note: Categories may not add to 100 due to rounding.
*13 percent of kitchen client households with children also have seniors.

[5]We also assessed responses to individual indicators of food insecurity and hunger for all kitchen client households and for households of different sizes (Table D.7 in Appendix D). In general, single-person households report more frequent and more severe episodes of food insecurity. This is most likely due to a disproportionate number of the single-person households consisting of homeless men. About two-thirds of all kitchen clients report that household members ate less than they should because "there wasn't enough money to buy food." Half of kitchen clients residing alone report "not eating for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food," compared with one-third of clients living in households containing two to four people, and one-fourth of clients living in households of five or more people.

TABLE IV.6

FOOD SECURITY STATUS OF EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS,
BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE
(Percentages)

	All Households	(SE)	Households With Children Under 18[a]	(SE)	Households With No Children but with Persons Age 60 or Older	(SE)
Food Secure	25.0	2.60	27.2	4.79	34.6	6.92
Food Insecure	75.0	2.60	72.8	4.79	65.3	6.92
Food Insecure without Hunger	27.4	2.20	24.9	3.92	33.8	6.43
Food Insecure with Hunger	47.7	2.97	47.9	6.02	31.5	5.41
SAMPLE SIZE	2,402		406		363	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]13 percent of kitchen client households with children also have seniors.

The prevalence of food security for kitchen client households receiving FSP benefits is generally similar to the food security of other seemingly eligible households (Table IV.7). For households ineligible for FSP benefits because of higher levels of income and resources, the proportion that are food secure (44 percent) is substantially higher than for households participating in the FSP (22 percent) and other FSP-eligible households (19 percent).

D. INCOME, POVERTY, AND MATERIAL HARDSHIP

The survey of EFAS clients allows us to construct both income- and consumption-oriented measures of the hardships faced by kitchen client households. Using income-oriented measures, we can compare the monthly or annual cash income of a household with the corresponding poverty threshold for households of that size. Using consumption-oriented measures, we can investigate what proportion of kitchen households have access to certain basis necessities, such as permanent shelter and sufficient food to avoid food insecurity with hunger.

1. Income and Poverty Levels

The survey of EFAS clients included two measures of household income: (1) last month's income, and (2) last year's income. The average income of kitchen client households was $708 for the most recent month, and $9,907 for the most recent year (Table IV.8). Average monthly income for the most recent year ($826 or $9,907 ÷ 12) was higher than average income for the most recent month, consistent with the hypothesis that the average kitchen client household has experienced a recent decline in its cash income. Compared with the corresponding average income levels, median household income levels were somewhat lower: $549 for the most recent month, and $7,000 for the most recent year.

In the most recent month, 86 percent of kitchen client households had incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level, and therefore met the gross income requirement for the Food

TABLE IV.7

FOOD SECURITY STATUS OF EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS,
BY PARTICIPATION IN THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM
(Percentages)

	All Kitchen Households	(SE)	Kitchen Households That Participate in FSP[a]	(SE)	Kitchen Households That Do Not Receive Food Stamps, but are Seemingly Eligible	(SE)	Kitchen Households That Do Not Receive Food Stamps and Are Seemingly Ineligible for FSP	(SE)
Food Secure	25.0	2.60	22.0	3.48	19.3	2.74	43.8	6.53
Food Insecure	75.0	2.60	78.0	3.48	80.7	2.74	56.2	6.53
Food Insecure without Hunger	27.4	2.20	22.9	3.46	31.7	3.24	24.2	4.90
Food Insecure with Hunger	47.7	2.97	55.1	3.81	49.0	4.01	32.0	7.38
SAMPLE SIZE	2,402		899		1,114		332	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding.

[a]Defined as participation in the last year.

TABLE IV.8

INCOME AND POVERTY OF EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

Characteristic	Percent Unless Otherwise Stated	(SE)
Household Income Last Month (mean dollars)	708	51.7
Household Income Last Month (median dollars)	549	22.8
Household Income Last Month as a Percentage of Poverty		
At or below 130%	86.3	2.15
Above 130%	13.7	2.15
Annual Household Income (mean dollars)	9,907	904.9
Annual Household Income (median dollars)	7,000	10.9
Annual Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty		
At or below 50%	42.8	3.65
51 to 100%	28.0	2.14
101 to 130%	12.0	1.80
Above 130%	17.2	2.53
Sample Size	2,425	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

Stamp Program. Fourteen percent of kitchen client households had incomes above 130 percent of the poverty level during the most recent month, and 17 percent had incomes above 130 percent of the poverty level during the most recent year. Seventy one percent of kitchen client households were at or below the poverty level over the course of the most recent year.

2. Consumption-Oriented Indicators of Material Hardship

We investigated several indicators of material hardship experienced by kitchen client households, including homelessness, food insecurity and hunger, and lack of access to various amenities useful for obtaining, preparing, or storing meals, such as kitchen appliances, a working telephone, and a working motor vehicle.

As noted above, approximately one in three (36 percent) emergency kitchen clients are homeless, and one-half (48 percent) are food insecure with hunger (Table IV.9). About 30 percent of kitchen clients lack access to a stove, oven, or microwave, and a similar percentage lacks access to a refrigerator. Over half (53 percent) of kitchen clients lacks access to a working telephone, and three-quarters (76 percent) lack access to a motor vehicle.

Of homeless kitchen clients, three-fifths (62 percent) are food insecure with hunger, compared with two-fifths (40 percent) of non-homeless clients. Dramatic differences between homeless kitchen clients and non-homeless kitchen clients were also evident in the proportion of clients with access to certain amenities. Seventy percent of homeless kitchen clients report they do not have access to a stove, oven, or microwave; 72 percent report they do not have access to a refrigerator; and 77 percent report they do not have access to a working telephone. In comparison, 8 percent of the non-homeless clients report they do not have access to kitchen appliances, and 8 percent report they do not have access to a refrigerator. About two in five kitchen clients who are not homeless nonetheless lack access to a working telephone. The

TABLE IV.9

INDICATORS OF HARDSHIP FOR ADULT
EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

	Frequency for All Clients		Frequency for Homeless Clients		Frequency for Non-Homeless Clients	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
Homeless	36.2	4.17	100.0	0.00	0.0	--
Food Insecure						
Food insecure without hunger	27.4	2.20	23.3	2.67	29.7	3.48
Food insecure with hunger	47.7	2.97	61.6	3.69	39.8	3.70
Lack access to stove, oven, or microwave	30.2	4.26	69.7	4.14	7.8	2.16
Lack access to refrigerator	30.8	4.15	72.0	4.13	7.5	1.98
Lack access to a working telephone	52.9	3.80	77.3	3.02	39.0	4.09
Lack access to a working car, truck, or motorcycle	75.7	3.38	89.1	3.49	68.1	4.11
SAMPLE SIZE	2,418		1,136		1,282	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: Refer to Table IV.4 for the proportion of all clients considering themselves homeless, regardless of residential setting.

proportion of kitchen clients without access to motor vehicles is also higher for homeless clients (89 percent) than for non-homeless clients (68 percent).

E. CHARACTERISTICS OF EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE SYSTEM USE

Federal food assistance programs are an important means of ensuring that individuals and families have enough to eat.[6] Additional sources of food include private emergency kitchens, food pantries and shelters, and food from nontraditional sources such as restaurant handouts, trash cans, and dumpsters. This section provides information on the frequency and duration of visits to emergency kitchens, as well as other sources of food that clients sought in the 12 months preceding their interview. Participation in public food assistance programs are described later in section G.

1. Use of Other Sources of Emergency Food Assistance by Kitchen Clients

We studied sources of emergency food assistance for four groups of emergency kitchen clients: (1) clients visiting a kitchen for the "first time ever" (6 percent), (2) clients who are visiting a kitchen for the first day this last week (39 percent), (3) clients who visited a kitchen on two to five days in the last week (43 percent), and (4) clients who visited a kitchen on six or seven days in the last week (13 percent) (Table IV.10).

[6]Government food assistance programs, including the Food Stamp Program (FSP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), child care meals, the Summer Food Service Program, and senior meals programs, will be discussed later in this chapter. Other government programs include the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which provides food to low-income pregnant, postpartum, and lactating women, infants, preschool age children, and senior citizens age 60 or older.

TABLE IV.10

USE OF EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE BY EMERGENCY KITCHEN USERS
(Percentages)

	All Kitchen Clients	(SE)	Clients Who Are Visiting For the First Time Ever	(SE)	Clients Who Are Visiting For the First Time This Week	(SE)	Clients Who Have Visited 2-5 Times in the Past Week	(SE)	Clients Who Have Visited 6-7 Times in the Past Week	(SE)
Proportion of All Kitchen Clients	100.0	0.00	5.7	1.44	38.7	2.59	42.7	2.11	12.9	1.36
Number of Weeks in a Row Visiting Kitchens During This "Episode"										
1 month or less	57.7	2.30	100.0	0.00	64.6	4.80	53.1	2.68	34.4	3.18
> 1 month but less than 6 months	23.0	2.04	N/A	--	18.8	3.86	26.1	1.85	34.7	2.92
> 6 months but less than 1 year	3.4	0.53	N/A	--	2.4	0.98	3.7	0.61	6.8	1.09
> 1 year	15.9	2.05	N/A	--	14.2	3.67	17.1	2.40	24.2	4.05
Children or Other Family Members Accompanied Client on Day of Observation	20.5	2.60	20.8	11.32	23.2	4.81	19.2	2.52	16.8	3.13
Use of (Other) Sources of Emergency Food in the Last 12 Months										
Food pantries	37.4	3.17	12.5	6.42	31.9	5.16	44.5	3.53	40.9	4.20
Shelters	44.6	3.78	23.0	10.83	40.6	5.68	45.4	4.05	63.5	3.61
Restaurant handouts/dumpster/ trash can	17.5	1.91	7.2	5.14	11.4	2.67	22.0	2.49	25.4	2.70
Sample Size	2,425		61		414		1,152		798	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

N/A = not applicable.

Nearly three-fifths (58 percent) of emergency kitchen clients report that their current "episode" of kitchen use began within the last month.[7] Only 16 percent of kitchen clients report that their current episode of kitchen use began a year or more before the survey. These findings suggest that most kitchen clients have relatively short-term needs for emergency food assistance or that they have sporadic episodes of need.

Among clients who have visited an emergency kitchen six or more times in the last week, only one-third (34 percent) report that their current episode of assistance began within the last month. This finding indicates that two-thirds of frequent kitchen visitors rely on this food assistance for multiple months. One-quarter (24 percent) of clients visiting kitchens on nearly a daily basis report that their current episode of assistance began at least a year before the survey.

Many kitchen clients rely on additional forms of emergency food assistance. Thirty-seven percent of kitchen clients report relying on food pantries during the last year and 45 percent report relying on shelters. Eighteen percent report getting food from a restaurant handout or back door or from a dumpster or trash can. Compared with clients visiting a kitchen for the first time ever, clients who visited kitchens about once per day are much more likely to have relied on other sources of emergency food assistance during the last year.

On the day of the interview, a child or other family member accompanied one-fifth (21 percent) of adult emergency kitchen clients and also received food from the kitchen, mobile van, or food wagon. The proportion of kitchen clients who live alone and who visit the kitchen alone is higher for homeless clients (65 percent) than for non-homeless clients (40 percent) (data not

[7]An "episode" is defined by consecutive weekly use of one or more kitchens. Respondents were asked "For how many weeks in a row have you had one or more meals from this or any other kitchen, mobile van, or food wagon?" A break in weekly visits to a kitchen would signify the end of an "episode".

shown). Nine percent of homeless kitchen clients and 16 percent of non-homeless kitchen clients were accompanied by children on the day of their visit to the kitchen.

2. Factors That Precipitated the Need for Emergency Food Assistance

The most common reason kitchen clients give for seeking emergency food assistance is low wages or being on a fixed income, indicated by 84 percent of clients (Table IV.11). Eighty-two percent of clients say that they have run out of money or have high expenses, 73 percent cite unemployment or other job-related difficulties, and 55 percent cite health or personal problems. About 69 percent of clients indicate that they prefer to get assistance from an EFAS kitchen than directly through a government program, and 41 percent cite problems with food stamps or welfare as their reason for seeking emergency assistance.

3. Inaccessibility to Emergency Food

While most kitchens serve meals to anyone who requests them, some kitchens have specific guidelines regarding who may receive a meal. For instance, some kitchens will only serve specific populations, such as those living in a particular place, those with (or without) children in the household, or those meeting specific income guidelines (Ohls et al. 2001). Hours and days of operations, as well as the availability of food, might also dictate whether or not an individual receives a meal. For these reasons and others, 30 percent of kitchen clients report that they needed food from a kitchen in the last 12 months, but were unable to get it (Table IV.12). This number reflects the access of those who live in areas that have access to an emergency kitchen, since they were sampled at a kitchen, and does not necessarily reflect access of the general population.

TABLE IV.11

EVENTS/FACTORS PRECIPITATING THE NEED FOR EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE BY ADULT KITCHEN CLIENTS

	Percentage of Adult Kitchen Clients	(SE)
Reasons for Seeking Emergency Food Assistance[a]		
Low wages/on a fixed income	84.0	1.74
No more money/high expenses	81.5	2.43
Unemployment/other job-related problems	72.9	3.16
Prefer to get food here instead of asking for help from the government	68.8	2.82
Health or personal problems	55.0	2.63
Problems with food stamps or welfare	40.7	2.91
SAMPLE SIZE[b]	2,417	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Multiple responses allowed for this question.
[b]Of the factors listed above, 51 individuals answered "don't know" and 1 refused to answer whether or not they "prefer to get food here instead of from the government; 15 or fewer individuals answered "don't know" to each of the other factors.

TABLE IV.12

INACCESSIBILITY TO EMERGENCY FOOD BY ADULT KITCHEN CLIENTS

	Percent	(SE)
Kitchen Clients who Had Trouble Getting Food From Kitchens (n = 2,421)	30.4	2.39
Reasons For Inability To Get Food[a] (n = 757)		
Did not arrive on time	24.6	4.06
Transportation problem	24.5	4.85
Provider ran out of food	20.8	2.94
Kitchen closed on weekends	10.4	2.38
Kitchen closed on weekdays	9.2	2.67
Closed-unspecified	5.2	2.25
Respondent's behavior	4.3	2.39
Did not meet income guidelines	3.3	1.46
Lacked proper identification or papers	3.1	0.98
Did not live in a certain area	2.8	1.17
Did not have referral	2.5	0.90
Client was sick	2.2	0.61
Lack of information about provider services	2.1	0.74
Came too often	1.4	0.54
Other[b]	5.3	1.14
In the last 12 months, Client Has Been Unable To Get Food		
Often	27.0	4.76
Sometimes	21.1	2.82
Rarely	29.7	4.51
Only once	22.2	3.18
SAMPLE SIZE	773	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Multiple responses allowed for this question.
[b]Includes all responses which were given by less than 1 percent of clients.

The two top reasons clients cite for not being able to receive food from an emergency kitchen are failure to arrive at the kitchen on time and a transportation problem, each cited by one-quarter of clients (Table IV.12). One-fifth of clients who were unable to receive assistance in the last report that the kitchen had run out of food, and one-tenth of clients report that a kitchen was not open on weekends.[8]

One-quarter (27 percent) of clients who were unable to get emergency food assistance from a kitchen during the last year say that this problem is something they encounter "often," while half say they encountered the problem only once or rarely. The survey did not collect information about the extent to which clients of one emergency kitchen have access to other emergency kitchens.

F. CLIENT SATISFACTION WITH KITCHEN PROVIDERS

The survey of kitchen clients included two measures of client satisfaction with emergency food assistance: (1) satisfaction with the amount of food received from the provider they visited on the day of the survey, and (2) satisfaction with the variety of food available from that provider. In addition, the survey asked clients about their perceptions of any religious activities that EFAS provider might have offered, such as prayer at mealtime.

1. Level of Satisfaction with the Amount and Variety of Food Received

Overall, client satisfaction with both the amount and variety of food received at emergency kitchens is high. Nearly all of the kitchen client population is either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with both the amount as well as the variety of food they receive from their

[8]Most emergency kitchens do not serve meals every day of the week. More than 80 percent of kitchens serve meals on at least some weekdays, but only about half operate on weekends. Of breakfast, lunch, and supper, about two-thirds of all kitchens serve lunch, about half serve supper, and slightly less than a third serve breakfast (Ohls et al. 2001).

provider (92 percent and 91 percent, respectively; Table IV.13). This is similar to what was found in the America's Second Harvest study (Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001), where 93 percent of adult emergency food recipients were either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with the amount of food they receive from their local hunger relief charity. Almost two-thirds (64 percent) of clients are "very satisfied" with the amount of food received at the EFAS kitchen, while about three-fifths (59 percent) are "very satisfied" with the variety of food received at the kitchen.[9]

2. Client Perceptions of Faith-Based Activities

About three-fifths of kitchen clients receive services from providers affiliated with a religious organization. It might be expected that providers linked to religious groups would be more likely than secular providers to ask kitchen clients to participate in religious activities, such as prayers at meals. However, the proportion of clients who report that they were asked to participate in prayers or other religious activities is about one-third for both "religious" and "non-religious" providers (Table IV.14). Of clients asked to participate in religious activities, two-thirds describe themselves as "very comfortable" with these activities; one-quarter describe themselves as "somewhat comfortable" with these activities; and only one-tenth describe themselves as "somewhat uncomfortable" or "very uncomfortable" with these activities.

Among clients who report that they were asked to participate in religious activities, four-fifths report that they did not share a religious affiliation with the provider (data not shown). Clients' comfort level with religious activities offered by the provider is not dramatically

[9]Table D.8 in Appendix D indicates how kitchen client satisfaction varies by race/ethnicity and sex.

TABLE IV.13

KITCHEN CLIENTS' SATISFACTION WITH EFAS PROVIDER'S FOOD

	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
Amount of Food (n=2,399)	64.0	2.92	27.6	2.26	6.2	1.49	2.2	0.66
Variety of Food (n=2,403)	58.5	3.02	32.0	2.37	6.2	1.38	3.3	0.82

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE IV.14

EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PROVIDER-SPONSORED RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

	Frequency for All Clients		Frequency for Clients of Religious Providers		Frequency for Clients of Non-Religious Providers	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
Clients asked to participate in prayers or other religious activities (n = 2,386)	34.4	2.70	34.7	3.61	34.1	3.54
Among clients asked to participate in religious activities: (n = 906)						
Feel very comfortable with religious activities	66.4	3.61	68.8	5.26	63.6	5.48
Feel somewhat comfortable with religious activities	23.4	3.08	20.3	4.53	27.0	4.87
Feel somewhat uncomfortable with religious activities	6.8	1.49	5.9	1.41	7.8	2.76
Feel very uncomfortable with religious activities	3.4	0.84	5.0	1.36	1.6	0.71
Clients who perceive their provider as secular or having a different religious affiliation than their own (n = 2,371)	87.9	2.11	87.4	1.67	88.4	3.96
Among clients perceiving their provider as secular or having a different religious affiliation than their own: (n = 2,056)						
Clients asked to participate in prayers or other religious activities	31.7	2.71	32.0	3.72	31.4	3.38
Among clients asked to participate in religious activities by a provider seen as secular or having a different religious affiliation: (n = 736)						
Feel very comfortable with religious activities	63.1	5.11	65.8	7.23	60.0	7.53
Feel somewhat comfortable with religious activities	25.4	4.43	22.6	6.33	28.5	6.56
Feel somewhat uncomfortable with religious activities	7.4	1.91	5.5	1.55	9.6	3.54
Feel very uncomfortable with religious activities	4.1	1.02	6.1	1.62	1.9	0.85
SAMPLE SIZE	2,386		1,401		985	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

different for clients unaffiliated with any religion than for clients as a whole. These findings suggests that either religious activities—such as mealtime prayers—offered by kitchen providers are not perceived as objectionable by most clients, *or* that the clients who are present at kitchens that ask them to participate in religious activities are those who are more likely to be comfortable with such activities.

G. FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

A number of federal food assistance programs are available to low-income people and people who meet certain eligibility criteria, in addition to the food commodity programs described earlier. The client survey was designed to investigate the frequency of participation in the major food assistance programs: Food Stamp Program (FSP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), the School Breakfast Program (SBP), and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), child care meals, the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and senior meal programs. Of primary interest was whether EFAS clients participated in food assistance programs that they seem eligible for and how often EFAS clients receive benefits from multiple programs.

1. Participation in Food Assistance Programs

A majority (55 percent) of emergency kitchen clients is in households that have received no assistance from a public food assistance program during the last year (Table IV.15). Three-tenths (29 percent) of kitchen clients are in households that have received assistance from a single public food assistance program over the last year, and only 15 percent are in households that have received assistance from two or more government programs.

TABLE IV.15

PARTICIPATION OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS IN PUBLIC FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR ADULT EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

Participation in Food Assistance Programs in the Last Year[a]	Households of All Kitchen Clients		Seemingly Eligible Households[b,c]	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
No Programs	55.4	3.03	24.6	3.75
One Program	29.4	2.17	27.4	3.57
Two or More Programs	15.2	2.13	47.9	4.52
Food Stamp Program (FSP)	35.6	2.81	44.4	2.84
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	5.9	1.08	53.1	7.41
Meals in Child Care Program or Head Start	1.9	0.62	18.8	4.47
School Breakfast Program (SBP)	10.1	1.74	71.3	5.20
National School Lunch Program (NSLP)	11.4	1.73	80.0	4.11
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	4.9	1.12	31.1	5.46
Meals-on-Wheels or Senior Meals Program	4.5	1.25	24.5	5.01
SAMPLE SIZE	2,398			

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: The percent of eligible cases out of all kitchen clients, except the cases with unknown program eligibility are: FSP: 82%; WIC: 11%; Meals in Child Care Program or Head Start: 10%; SBP: 14%; NSLP: 14%; SFSP: 16%; Meals-on-Wheels or Senior Meals Program: 19%.

[a]Participation in the last year does not necessarily mean that the household participated in the last month.
[b]When program participation is not reported, seemingly eligible households are identified by income/resources (FSP program), income/household characteristics (WIC, NSLP, SBP), or household characteristics only (remaining programs).
[c]Sample size varies by program.

Among clients in households that appear to be eligible for multiple programs,[10] 48 percent are in households that have actually received assistance from two or more programs. Among clients in households eligible for at least one government food assistance program, three-quarters are in households where members participate in at least one program, and one-quarter are in households where members participate in no programs.

Among specific government food assistance programs, kitchen clients' households use the FSP most (Table IV.15; Figure IV.3). More than one-third (36 percent) of kitchen clients report some FSP participation by a household member during the last year. Eleven percent of kitchen clients report that household members participated in the free and reduced-price component of the NSLP during the last year, and 10 percent of kitchen clients report participating in the SBP. The proportion of clients reporting household members' participation in each of the other programs is much lower: only 6 percent participate in WIC; 5 percent each for the SFSP and Meals-on-Wheels or senior meals programs, and only 2 percent for meals offered through a child care center or Head Start program.

Among kitchen clients in households that appeared eligible for assistance through particular government food assistance programs,[11] participation rates of household members vary considerably by program. About 80 percent of clients with households eligible for NSLP report NSLP participation during the last year, and 71 percent of clients in households eligible for the

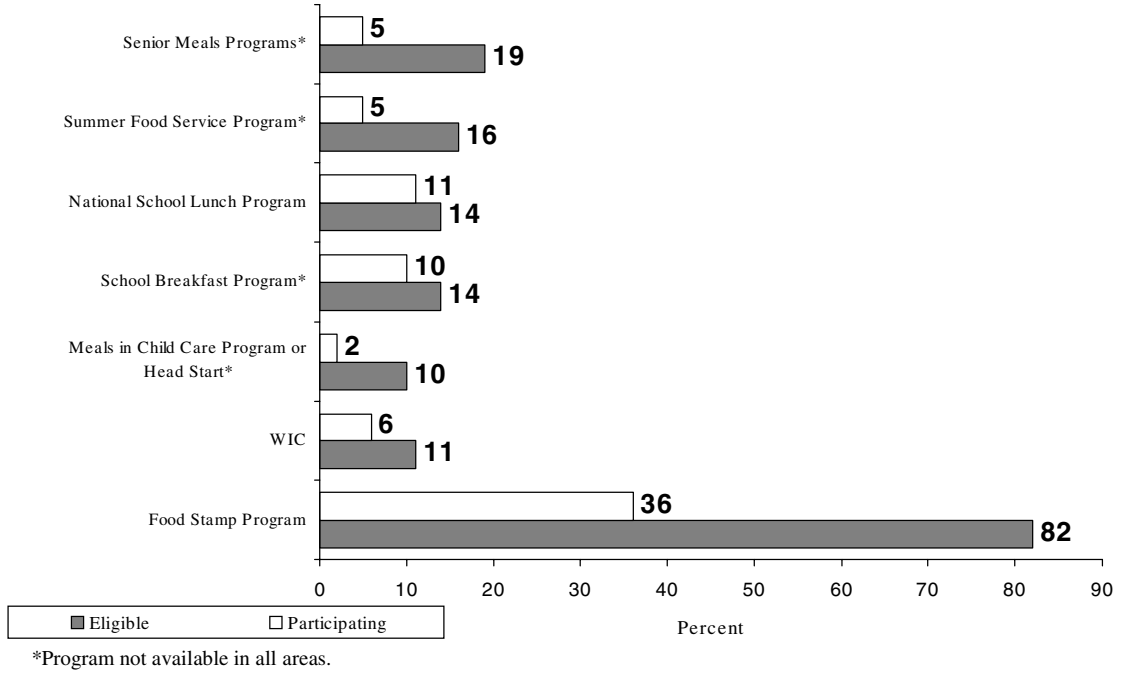
[10]Despite the presence of demographic, income, and asset information for the households in the survey, the measurement of program eligibility during the past year was imprecise because household characteristics may have changed from month to month over the course of the year.

[11]Appendix C describes how program eligibility was estimated based on household characteristics. As noted for pantry client households, the numbers reflect use of the program by households who appear to be eligible. Due to data limitations, they do not reflect whether the programs are locally available to respondents. The SBP, the SFSP, senior meals programs and meals in child care programs are not available in all areas.

SBP report SBP participation during the last year (Table IV.15). More than one-half (55 percent) of clients with household members eligible for WIC report participation during the last year. In comparison, about 44 percent of clients with households eligible for the FSP report participation during the last year.

FIGURE IV.3

ELIGIBILITY FOR, AND PARTICIPATION IN, FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AMONG ALL KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



*Program not available in all areas.

Participation rates of eligible household members in other government programs are well under half for each program (with the exception of WIC), but this may reflect limitations in the survey data. Only one-third (31 percent) of clients with household members eligible for the SFSP report participation during the last year, but the EFAS survey does not indicate how many children per household participate in summer programs offering SFSP meals. Only one-quarter of clients with household members eligible for nutrition benefits through Meals-on-Wheels or some other senior meals program report receiving such benefits. Only one-fifth (19 percent) of

clients with household members eligible for nutrition benefits through a child care center or Head Start program report that members receive such benefits. Once again, the fact that the survey data do not distinguish children actually in child care or Head Start from other young children leads to a lower estimate of participation in these feeding programs than would otherwise be the case.[12]

2. Reasons for Not Participating in Food Assistance Programs

More than half of all kitchen client households (56 percent) are seemingly eligible kitchen households with no FSP participation in the last year (Table IV.16). Among these households, 70 percent have not applied for the FSP in the last year, while 12 percent have applied and have been turned down. About half of those turned down plan to reapply for food stamps.

About one in seven seemingly eligible kitchen households (14 percent) is not currently participating in the FSP, but participated in the last year. About 41 percent of these households have used food stamps in the last year and are currently reapplying for the program. Eleven percent applied for food stamps in the last year, were turned down, and are reapplying. Ten percent applied in the last year, were turned down, and are not reapplying.

The most common reason that applicants gave for being turned down for food stamp benefits is that their income is too high (35 percent of seemingly eligible kitchen clients with no FSP participation in the last year, and 25 percent of those not currently participating, but who participated in the last year). This reason for denial was reported by four percent of all seemingly eligible kitchen client

[12]Participation in food assistance programs varies by the frequency with which clients visit kitchens and by the particular program (see Table D.9, Appendix D).

TABLE IV.16

REASONS NOT CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING IN THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM (FSP)
(Seemingly Eligible Kitchen Client Households Not Currently Participating)

	Percentage of Subgroup	(SE)
Households With No FSP Participation in the Last Year		
As a percentage of all seemingly eligible pantry households (n = 1,997)	55.7	2.85
Application for the FSP in the last 12 months (n = 1,085[a])		
Did not apply for food stamps	70.4	3.60
Applied for food stamps, were turned down, and are reapplying	5.3	1.25
Applied for food stamps, were turned down, and are not reapplying	6.4	1.37
Applied for food stamps, and not turned down	17.9	26.4
Reasons Application for FSP Was Turned Down (n = 123[b,c])		
Income was too high	35.4	9.11
Work requirements were not satisfied	22.9	8.84
Missing paperwork	7.8	2.92
Too many assets	4.6	3.83
Citizenship status	3.0	2.78
Barriers to Applying for Food Stamps/Never Applied (n = 889[c,d])		
Don't think they qualify, sanctioned, lost eligibility, or doubtful of eligibility	36.3	4.00
Do not know about FSP or how to get benefits	11.5	3.68
Prefer not to receive welfare/help from government	11.0	2.34
No longer need food stamps	9.3	2.73
Too much paperwork/can't fill out forms	8.2	1.28
Feelings of embarrassment/discomfort	7.4	3.71
Small benefits not worth the effort	4.2	0.95
Do not have transportation to Food Stamp office	2.9	0.95
Questions too personal	1.3	0.43
Food Stamp office hours are inconvenient	0.5	0.29
Negative attitudes of Food Stamp office staff	0.4	0.20
Households Not Currently Participating in the FSP, but Participated in the Last Year		
As a percentage of all seemingly eligible pantry households (n = 1,997)	13.8	1.82
Participation in FSP in the last 12 months (n = 262[e])		
Have used food stamps in the last 12 months and are currently reapplying for the program	40.6	6.12
Have used food stamps in the last 12 months and are not currently reapplying for the program	59.4	6.12

TABLE IV.16 (*continued*)

	Percentage of Subgroup	(SE)
Application for the FSP in the last 12 months (n = 262[e])		
Applied for food stamps in the last 12 months, were turned down, and are reapplying	10.7	2.42
Applied for food stamps in the last 12 months, were turned down, and are not reapplying	9.8	2.04
Applied for food stamps, and not turned down	79.5	3.05
Reasons Application for FSP Was Turned Down for Those Who Lost Food Stamps in the Last Year, Reapplied and Were Turned Down (n = 62[c,f])		
Work requirements were not satisfied	45.7	11.93
Income was too high	25.1	9.47
Missing paperwork	20.6	6.64
Barriers to Applying for/Receiving Food Stamps If Not Turned Down (n = 173[c,g])		
Don't think they qualify, sanctioned, lost eligibility, or doubtful of eligibility	45.7	10.53
Prefer not to receive welfare/help from government	8.5	5.78
No longer need food stamps	4.0	3.25
Too much paperwork/can't fill out forms	2.8	1.56
Questions too personal	2.1	1.90
Small benefits not worth the effort	1.8	1.58
Negative attitudes of Food Stamp office staff	1.3	0.90
Food Stamp office hours are inconvenient	1.1	0.80
Feelings of embarrassment/discomfort	0.6	0.67
Do not have transportation to Food Stamp office	0.2	0.10
Do not know about FSP or how to get benefits	0.0	--

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: Sample for all tabulations is limited to seemingly eligible households not currently participating in FSP.

N/A = not applicable

[a]Base is all seemingly eligible households with no participation in the FSP in the last year.

[b]Base is households in previous panel who had applied for food stamps in the last year and were turned down.

[c]Multiple responses were allowed, but responses with very low frequency are not reported.

[d]Base is all seemingly eligible households not receiving food stamps in the last year who have not applied for food stamps in the last year, and do not have plans in the near future to apply.

[e]Base is all seemingly eligible households that participated in the last year, but that are not currently receiving food stamps.

[f]Base is all seemingly eligible households that are not currently receiving food stamps, but have received food stamps during the past year, stopped receiving them and were turned down when they reapplied for the FSP.

[g]Base is all seemingly eligible households that are not currently receiving food stamps, but have received them in the last year and have not had an FSP application turned down in the last year.

households. The second most common reason for denial is failure to comply with work requirements (23 percent of kitchen clients with no participation in the past year and 46 percent of those not currently participating, but who participated in the past year). This represents four percent of all seemingly eligible kitchen client households not currently receiving food stamps.

When asked what barriers they face in applying for or receiving food stamps, 36 percent of kitchen client households with no FSP participation in the past year who have never applied for food stamps cite either doubts about their eligibility, loss of eligibility, or previous sanctions, as the most common barriers to FSP participation. Among kitchen client households who are not currently participating in the FSP but have participated in the past year and have not had an FSP application turned down, 46 percent cite either doubts about their eligibility, loss of eligibility, or previous sanctions, as the most common barriers to FSP participation. The households that report these barriers to current FSP participation represent almost 28 percent of all seemingly eligible pantry households that are not currently receiving food stamps.

Kitchen clients were also asked why household members did not participate in each of four child nutrition programs during the last year: WIC, SBP, NSLP, and SFSP. For WIC and the NLSP, the most common reason cited by clients with seemingly eligible household members is doubt about eligibility (48 percent of clients with household members seemingly eligible for WIC, and 24 percent of clients with household members seemingly eligible for the NSLP) (Table IV.17). In the case of the SBP, in contrast, 40 percent of kitchen clients with seemingly eligible household members report that they did not participate because their child eats breakfast at home. In the case of the SFSP, almost half (44 percent) of kitchen clients with seemingly

TABLE IV.17

REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS AMONG SEEMINGLY ELIGIBLE BUT NON-PARTICIPATING HOUSEHOLDS CONTAINING EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS
(Percentages of Adult Respondents Indicating Given Reason)

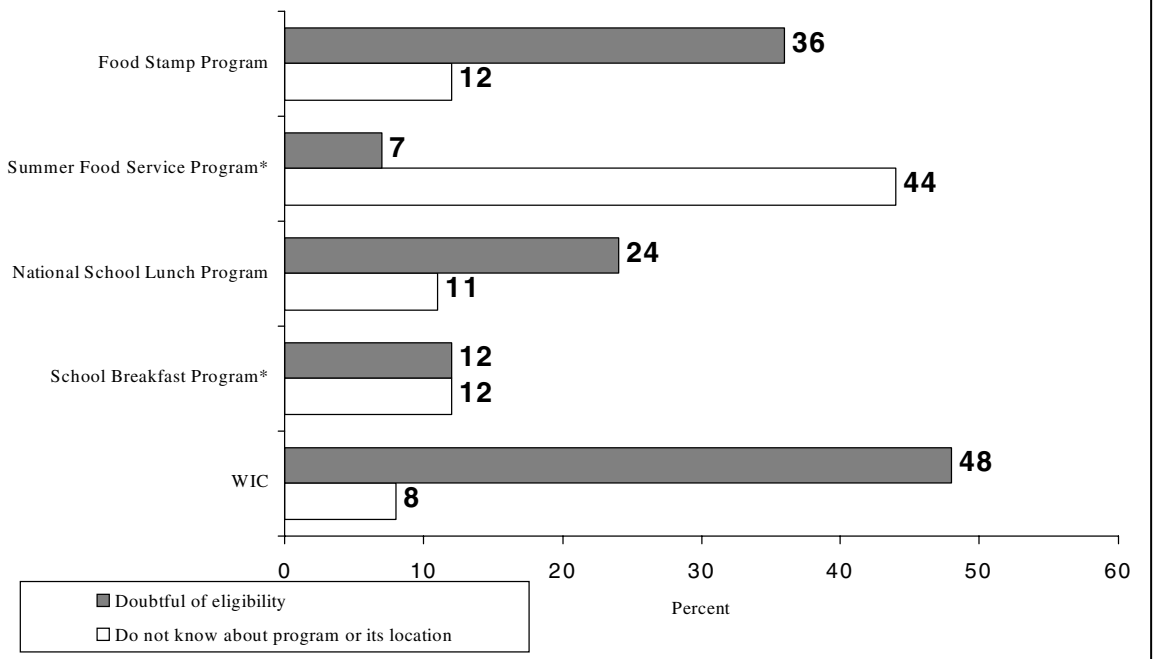
	Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)		School Breakfast Program (SBP)		National School Lunch Program (NSLP)		Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	
Reason for Non-Participation	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	SE
Doubtful of eligibility	47.7	9.96	11.7	5.46	23.6	9.65	7.3	2.97
Do not know about program or its location	7.5	3.98	11.7	3.83	11.0	4.99	44.1	9.72
Program unavailable in school/area	0.0	--	5.5	2.45	3.2	2.05	13.0	6.86
Do not know how to participate or do not know how to get benefits	10.3	6.43	1.7	1.31	2.2	2.11	1.5	0.94
Difficulty filling out forms	1.6	1.58	1.0	0.75	0.0	--	0.0	--
Lack transportation to program or office hours inconvenient	1.2	0.76	5.1	2.67	0.0	--	5.2	2.71
Feelings of embarrassment or discomfort	0.8	0.86	13.2	5.96	8.9	6.44	0.1	0.09
Not worth the trouble	0.0	--	0.2	0.17	0.3	0.28	0.7	0.42
Do not like food that is served	0.0	--	7.6	4.59	4.1	3.54	0.9	0.62
Do not eat meal at that time of day	0.0	--	13.0	5.95	0.0	--	0.0	--
Eat meal at home or from other sources of support	2.4	1.85	39.8	10.18	25.4	18.24	11.2	5.24
SAMPLE SIZE	70		77		54		161	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

eligible household members report that they are unaware of the program, a far higher percentage than for any of the other child nutrition programs (Figure IV.4). In part, this reflects the relatively limited availability of the SFSP.

FIGURE IV.4

REASONS FOR NON-PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS AMONG ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS CONTAINING KITCHEN CLIENTS



*Program not available in all areas.

H. CONTRASTING DIVERSE GROUPS OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS

While not all household members accompany EFAS clients on their visits to soup kitchens, understanding the diversity of kitchen client households can be useful for several reasons. For instance, investigating how groups differ in terms of household characteristics, income, poverty levels, residential status, and food security can indicate which groups face the greatest hardships and which have the most cash income. Moreover, comparing program participation patterns can

indicate which groups of kitchen client households are most dependent on EFAS for food assistance and which have the most access to public food assistance programs.[13]

1. Households Defined by Demographic Characteristics

One-fifth (20 percent) of kitchen client households include children younger than 18, while 17 percent includes elderly members (60 or older) but no children (Table IV.18).[14] The remaining 63 percent includes neither children nor elderly members.

As we would expect, kitchen client households with children are larger than others, averaging 4.3 persons per household compared with 1.4 to 1.6 persons per household for the groups of households without children (Table IV.18). Of the three types of households, those with elderly members are the least likely to rely on workers for economic support. The proportion of households relying on cash welfare (TANF, SSI, or GA) is larger for households with children than for households with neither children nor elderly members.

Monthly and annual incomes are highest for kitchen client households with children and lowest for households with neither children nor elderly members (Table IV.18). Despite these differences in average income levels, the distribution of income relative to the poverty level is similar for all three groups.

Households with elderly members and no children are more likely to live in an owner-occupied dwelling than are other types of kitchen client households (Table IV.19). Kitchen clients living with neither children nor elderly members are significantly more likely to be

[13]Appendix C describes the analytic methods we used to test for the statistical significance of differences between groups of households and to account for sample design effects.

[14]Of kitchen client households including children, 13 percent includes an elderly member (Table IV.18).

TABLE IV.18

HOUSEHOLD, INCOME, AND POVERTY CHARACTERISTICS OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

Characteristics	Group 1 Households with Children under Age 18 (20% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households without Children but with Elderly (Age 60+) (17% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households with Neither Children or Elderly (63% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)
Household Characteristics						
Household includes elderly (%)	12.6[b,c]	3.00	100.0[a]	0.00	0.0[a]	0.00
Persons per household	4.3[b,c]	0.16	1.6[a]	0.11	1.4[a]	0.06
Household with workers (%)	47.1[b,c]	5.87	12.6[a,c]	3.62	23.3[a,b]	3.50
Household with cash welfare (%)	44.6[c]	5.48	31.3	5.18	29.4[a]	4.06
Income and Poverty						
Monthly cash income ($)	1,046[b,c]	128.4	777[a,c]	46.4	589[a,b]	51.8
Monthly income ≤ 130% of poverty (%)	89.5	3.92	83.7	3.74	86.0	2.22
Annual cash income ($)	13,045[c]	1,389.4	10,352	1,655.9	8,873[a]	996.4
Annual income ≤ 50% of poverty (%)	53.4	4.82	38.1	6.14	49.7	4.36
Annual income 51-100% of poverty (%)	36.0	5.17	43.9	6.29	31.3	3.67
Annual income 101-130% of poverty (%)	2.9	1.41	5.5	3.14	3.3	0.67
Annual income > 130% of poverty (%)	7.7	2.50	12.4	4.24	15.7	3.15
Sample Size	415		325		1,622	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]Significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]Significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

TABLE IV.19

RESIDENTIAL STATUS, FOOD SECURITY, AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION
OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP

Characteristics	Group 1 Households with Children under Age 18 (20% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households without Children but with Elderly (Age 60+) (17% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households with Neither Children nor Elderly (63% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)
Residential and Food Security Status						
Household member owns residence (%)	9.8[b,c]	2.62	22.8[a,c]	6.21	2.4[a,b]	0.61
Homeless respondent (%)	20.8[c]	4.61	10.9[c]	3.24	48.5[a,b]	4.63
Food secure (%)	27.2	4.79	34.6	6.92	21.7	2.66
Food insecure (%)	72.8	4.79	65.4	6.92	78.3	2.66
Food insecure without hunger (%)	24.9	3.92	33.8	6.43	26.3	2.27
Food insecure with hunger (%)	47.9[b]	6.02	31.5[a,c]	5.41	52.0[b]	3.13
Program Participation						
Problems with FSP or welfare reported (%)	50.0	5.86	36.8	5.58	39.1	2.92
HH includes FSP recipients (%)	52.1[b,c]	5.73	32.7[a]	5.59	30.2[a]	3.09
HH includes eligible non-recipients of the FSP (%)	36.6[c]	5.13	40.0	5.62	48.9[a]	3.00
HH members are ineligible for the FSP (%)	7.5[b,c]	2.38	25.1[a]	5.5	18.3[a]	3.14
HH members' FSP eligibility is uncertain (%)	3.7	1.3	2.2	1.01	2.6	0.86
HH members rely on public food assistance (%)	86.0[b,c]	3.87	47.8[a,c]	5.02	30.8[a,b]	3.14
HH members rely on multiple EFAS programs (%)	75.0[b]	4.62	57.0[a]	6.30	66.2	3.38
HH members rely on kitchens only (%)	4.8[b,c]	1.7	23.9[a]	5.17	26.6[a]	3.53
Sample Size	415		325		1,622	

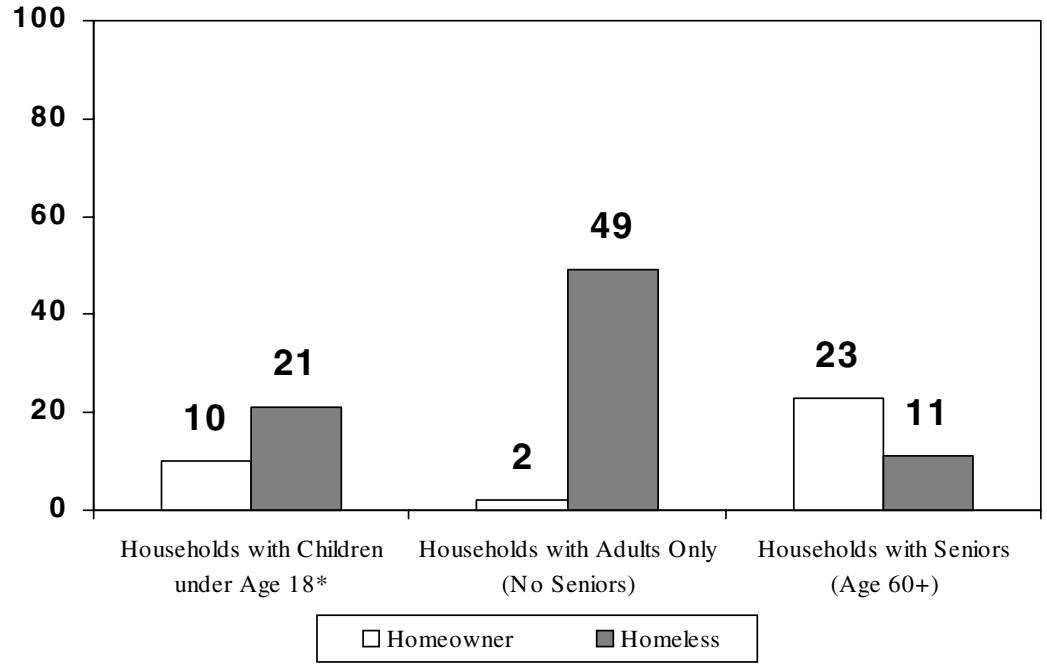
SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]Significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]Significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]Significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

homeless than are other kitchen clients; nearly half (49 percent) of kitchen clients living with neither children nor elderly persons are homeless (Figure IV.5). About half (52 percent) of kitchen client households without children or elderly members and about half (48 percent) of kitchen client households with children experience food insecurity with hunger, compared with one-third (32 percent) of kitchen client households with elderly members and no children.

FIGURE IV.5

RESIDENTIAL STATUS OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP



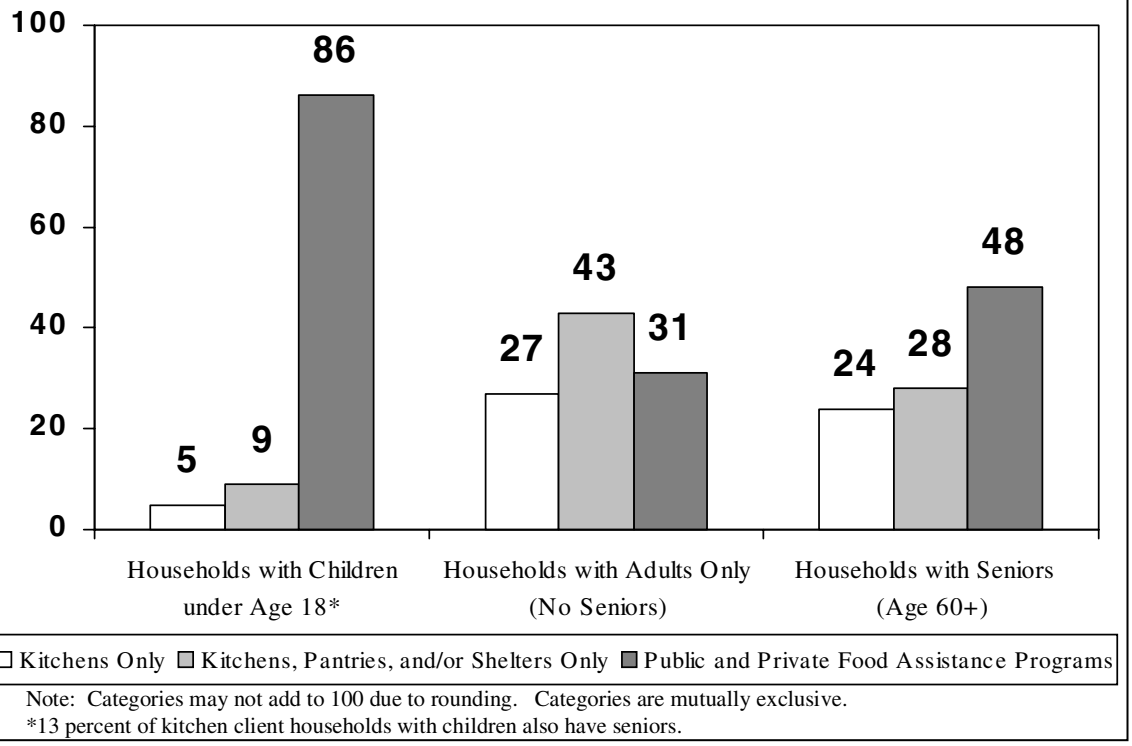
*13 percent of kitchen client households with children also have seniors.

Perhaps because of their greater reliance on cash welfare, kitchen client households with children are more likely than other households to report receiving food stamps (Table IV.19). Kitchen client households with elderly members are less likely than those with children to be eligible for food stamps. The vast majority (86 percent) of kitchen client households with children receive assistance from such public food assistance programs as the FSP, WIC, School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Summer Food Service Program, or child

care or elder nutrition programs (Figure IV.6). Households with neither children or elderly members are more likely than other kitchen client households to rely not on public food assistance programs but on other sources of EFAS, such as shelters and food pantries. This finding is consistent with the higher prevalence of homelessness among this group of kitchen clients.

FIGURE IV.6

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY DEMOGRAPHIC GROUP



Note: Categories may not add to 100 due to rounding. Categories are mutually exclusive.
*13 percent of kitchen client households with children also have seniors.

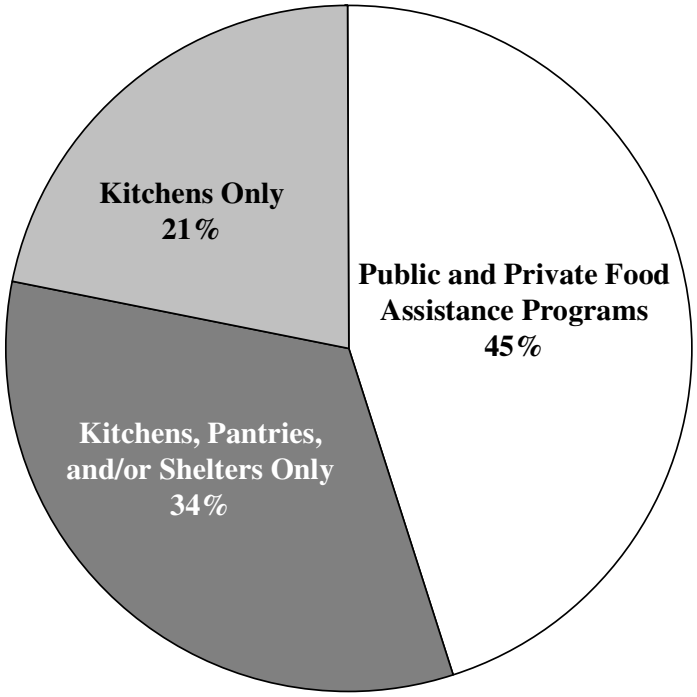
2. Households Defined by Participation in EFAS and Public Food Assistance Programs

Almost half (45 percent) of kitchen client households rely on one or more of the public food assistance programs listed above for food assistance (Table IV.20, Figure IV.7). One-third (34 percent) relies on multiple sources of EFAS (such as shelters or food pantries, in addition to soup

kitchens) but not on public food assistance programs.[15] About one-fifth (21 percent) relies on EFAS kitchens for food assistance but neither public food assistance programs nor EFAS pantries or shelters.

FIGURE IV.7

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF KITCHEN HOUSEHOLDS



As we would expect, households using public food assistance programs—many of which are targeted at children—are much more likely to include children than are other kitchen client households (Table IV.20). Those using public food assistance programs are larger on average than are other kitchen client households (2.6 persons per household versus 1.6 persons), and are more likely to be receiving cash welfare benefits (TANF, SSI, or GA).

[15]As shown later in Table IV.21, 74 percent of kitchen client households using public food assistance programs also use two or more forms of private food assistance.

TABLE IV.20

HOUSEHOLD, INCOME, AND POVERTY CHARACTERISTICS OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Characteristics	Group 1 Households Using Public and Private Food Assistance Programs (45% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households Using Kitchens, Pantries and/or Shelters Only (34% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households Using Kitchens Only (21% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)
Household Characteristics						
Household includes children (%)	37.1[b,c]	3.47	5.3[a]	2.12	4.4[a]	1.49
Household includes elderly (%)	23.7[b]	3.34	14.7[a]	3.02	19.2	5.40
Household has neither children nor elderly (%)	45.6[b,c]	4.33	81.1[a]	3.47	78.6[a]	5.45
Persons per household	2.6[b,c]	0.13	1.6[a]	0.08	1.6[a]	0.09
Household with workers (%)	27.6	3.76	21.1	3.40	30.9	5.44
Household with cash welfare (%)	45.4[b,c]	4.35	26.8[a]	3.99	19.4[a]	6.57
Income and Poverty						
Monthly cash income ($)	711	69.4	633	64.3	828	93.3
Monthly income ≤ 130% of poverty (%)	90.4	3.17	83.0	3.74	81.4	3.76
Annual cash income ($)	8,982[c]	839.2	9,292	1,011.7	12,763[a]	2,084.8
Annual income ≤ 50% of poverty (%)	53.7	4.19	47.3	4.05	41.0	7.92
Annual income 51-100% of poverty (%)	35.9	3.76	34.3	4.14	31.0	7.94
Annual income 101-130% of poverty (%)	2.5	0.86	4.8	1.83	4.0	1.56
Annual income > 130% of poverty (%)	7.9[c]	2.31	13.6	2.50	24.0[a]	6.05
Sample Size	1,079		911		384	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

Households using only EFAS kitchens tend to have higher levels of annual income than kitchen client households using public food assistance programs (Table IV.20). Consistent with this finding, households using only EFAS kitchens are more likely to have had incomes above 130 percent of the poverty level during the last year than other types of kitchen client households.

Rates of homeownership are similar for all three groups of kitchen client households defined by program participation, but rates of homelessness vary significantly by group. The prevalence of homelessness is highest (51 percent) for kitchen clients using multiple forms of EFAS and lowest (20 percent) for clients only using EFAS kitchens (Table IV.21). This probably reflects those in the multiple EFAS user group being more likely to be users of shelters. One-third of kitchen clients with household members using public food assistance programs are homeless.

The prevalence of food insecurity for kitchen client households is highly correlated with participation in EFAS and public food assistance programs (Figure IV.8). The prevalence of food insecurity is highest (88 percent) for kitchen client households using multiple forms of EFAS and lowest (53 percent) for households using only EFAS kitchens. About three-fourths (76 percent) of kitchen client households using public food assistance programs are food-insecure. While more than half of those using public food assistance programs or multiple forms of EFAS experience food insecurity with hunger, only 28 percent of clients using only EFAS kitchens experience food insecurity with hunger. Taken together, these findings suggest kitchen client households using public food assistance programs face fewer material hardships than those relying only on multiple forms of EFAS, but they face more material hardships than households relying only on kitchens.

TABLE IV.21

RESIDENTIAL STATUS, FOOD SECURITY, AND PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS, BY PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

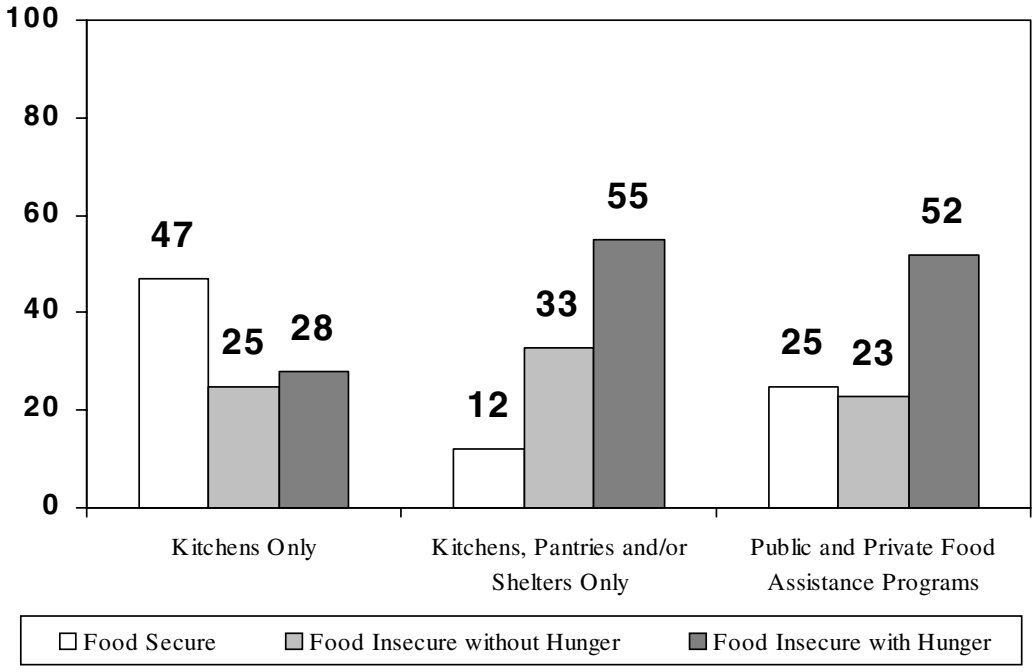
Characteristics	Group 1 Households Using Public and Private Food Assistance Programs (45% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 2 Households Using Kitchens, Pantries, and/or Shelters (34% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)	Group 3 Households Using Kitchens Only (21% of Kitchen HHs) Mean	(SE)
Residential and Food Security Status						
Household member owns residence (%)	8.0	2.33	5.4	1.56	8.2	2.13
Homeless respondent (%)	33.2[b,c]	5.48	50.5[a,c]	4.87	19.7[a,b]	4.15
Food secure (%)	24.5[b,c]	4.07	12.0[a,c]	1.85	47.1[a,b]	5.83
Food insecure (%)	75.5[b,c]	4.07	88.0[a,c]	1.85	52.9[a,b]	5.83
Food insecure without hunger (%)	23.4	3.53	33.0	3.87	24.8	5.69
Food insecure with hunger (%)	52.1[c]	4.12	55.0[c]	4.54	28.1[a,b]	4.47
Program Participation						
Problems with FSP or welfare reported (%)	49.4[b,c]	4.10	40.4[a,c]	3.21	22.4[a,b]	5.03
HH includes FSP recipients (%)	80.2	2.96	0.0	--	0.0	--
HH includes eligible non-recipients of the FSP (%)	14.9[b,c]	2.70	70.7[a]	4.23	64.0[a]	5.58
HH members are ineligible for the FSP (%)	4.5[b,c]	1.25	26.2[a]	4.07	31.0[a]	5.66
HH members' FSP eligibility is uncertain (%)	0.4[b,c]	0.20	3.2[a]	1.16	5.0[a]	1.56
HH members rely on pantries, kitchens, and/or shelters (%)	74.0[b,c]	3.00	100.0[a]	0.00	0.0[a]	--
Sample Size	1,079		911		384	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]significant difference from mean for group 1 at the 0.05 level
[b]significant difference from mean for group 2 at the 0.05 level
[c]significant difference from mean for group 3 at the 0.05 level

FIGURE IV.8

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND FOOD SECURITY OF KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS



Given the disproportionate prevalence of homelessness and food insecurity faced by kitchen client households using only multiple forms of EFAS, policymakers may want to consider ways to expand the participation of these households in public food assistance programs. While about 71 percent of these households appear to be eligible for the FSP, forty percent experienced problems receiving FSP or welfare benefits. Kitchen client households using multiple forms of EFAS have, relative to the poverty level, a similar distribution of annual income as have kitchen client households using public food assistance programs. Nonetheless, the proportion of FSP-eligible households considering themselves ineligible for food stamps is twice as high for households using multiple forms of EFAS (42 percent) as for households using public food assistance programs (22 percent—data not shown). It is possible that the FSP work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents could be one of the reasons that many members of the

kitchen-user population believe they are ineligible. However, given the high proportion of eligible households considering themselves ineligible for the FSP, educating kitchen clients on the eligibility standards for the FSP and other public food assistance programs could help increase needy individuals' participation in these programs.

V. DISCUSSION OF STUDY FINDINGS

EFAS incorporates both public and private sources of food assistance and provides food to low-income individuals and families on a short-term or long-term basis, depending on people's needs and circumstances. EFAS fills a gap in public assistance for a diverse clientele. EFAS clients include people who are either not getting or seeking public aid for which they are eligible, those who supplement public assistance, and those who are not eligible (or borderline-eligible) for public aid and who find that EFAS providers' services offer an additional cushion of food support.

The number and size of EFAS providers and the number of people they serve are impressive. Food pantries represent the largest component in the EFAS system and have become an important source of food for poor families over the last two decades, providing 6 million meal equivalents per day, or 2.2 billion meal equivalents per year (Ohls et al. 2001). Emergency kitchens provide about 173 million meals per year to poor individuals and families, and serve a much smaller number of people than food pantries. A USDA report to Congress estimates the size of private food assistance at one-tenth of the federal nutrition safety net (Ohls et al. 2001; Food and Nutrition Service 2001).[1]

This chapter summarizes our findings about EFAS clients–who they are, why they seek or need food assistance, their material hardships, the barriers they face when seeking food assistance, and whether they seek assistance from emergency food providers as a supplement (or alternative to) food stamps or other food assistance programs that they may be eligible to

[1]Daponte and Bade (2000) estimate the value or cost of private food assistance (including food, volunteer staff, and operating expenses of food banks and pantries) at $2.3 billion annually.

participate in. We compare the household characteristics and food security of EFAS clients to the general low-income population in the U.S. Finally, we discuss EFAS utilization patterns in concert with public food assistance program participation for vulnerable population groups of policy interest, including households with children and households with seniors, to better understand the choices people make about the place or places they visit for food assistance.

A. FOOD PANTRY AND EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS

Food pantries and emergency kitchens serve different and diverse populations, yet similar patterns for some client characteristics exist, such as employment and average annual household income. People who use emergency food assistance include single-parent families, low-income families with children, the homeless, the unemployed, the working poor, and families with elderly or disabled members. Significant overlap exists in clients who rely on both pantries and kitchens: about 19 percent of pantry client households reported receiving meals from emergency kitchens and 12 percent reported meals from shelters in the 12 months preceding the interview. More than one-third of kitchen clients (37 percent) reported food pantry use in the last year and 45 percent received meals from shelters, indicative of the high proportion of homeless kitchen clientele. Similar findings of cross-utilization of kitchen and pantry services by clients in the Second Harvest network were reported for the *Hunger in America 2001 Study.*[2]

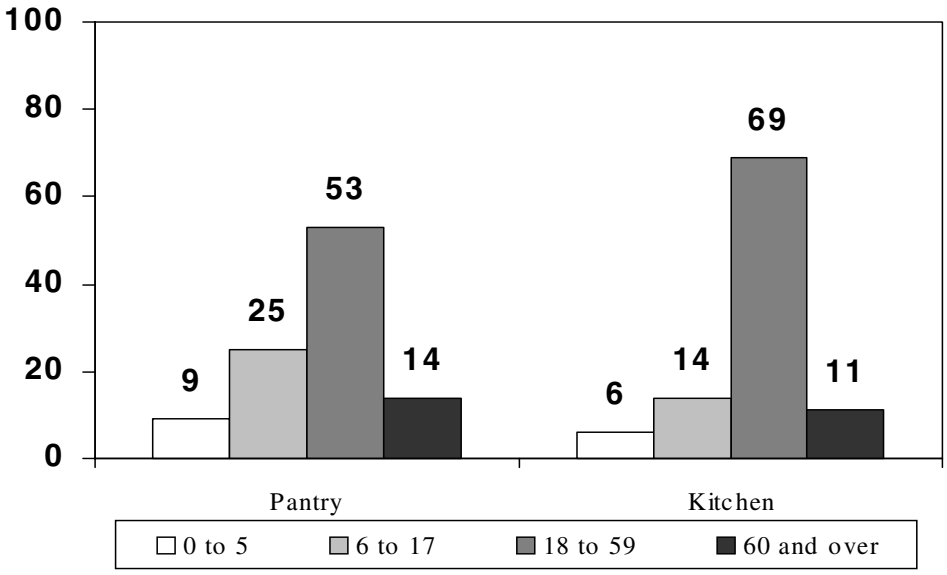
Almost half (45 percent) of pantry client households are single-parent or married/cohabiting families with children, whereas only 20 percent of kitchen client households include children. About 18 percent of pantry client households are a female living alone. In contrast, emergency kitchen clients are typically a male living alone (38 percent) or a single adult living with other

[2]Fourteen percent of pantry client households reported kitchen use and 41 percent of kitchen clients reported food pantry use among clients in the Second Harvest network (Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001).

unrelated adults (18 percent). Figure V.1 displays the distribution of age groups across all pantry and kitchen client households (see Table D.10). Overall, about 34 percent of pantry household members and 20 percent of kitchen household members are children under age 18; about 40 percent of children are under age six. About 14 percent of pantry household members and 11 percent of kitchen household members are seniors.

FIGURE V.1

AGE COMPOSITION OF ALL MEMBERS OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS,
BY TYPE OF EFAS PROVIDER



Note: Numbers may not add to 100 due to rounding.

About half of adult kitchen clients live alone and visit kitchens alone. Among homeless kitchen clients, two-thirds live alone and visit kitchens alone (data not shown). Among non-homeless clients we observed a different pattern. One third of non-homeless adults live with others, but visited the kitchen alone, suggesting that receiving a meal at a kitchen may be a coping mechanism used to stretch family food or resources. In addition, among the non-homeless, 9 percent of kitchen clients were accompanied by other adult family members and 16 percent were accompanied by children. Among homeless clients, 9 percent were accompanied by children.

1. Employment and the Working Poor

About one-fourth (26 percent) of both pantry and kitchen client households include an employed person. Mean annual household income is similar between the two types of clients ($10,776 for pantry households and $9,907 for kitchen households). However, pantry client households are larger than kitchen client households (mean household size of 2.9 compared with 2.1), resulting in a higher proportion of pantry client households below the poverty level compared with kitchen households. A high proportion of kitchen and pantry clients have less than a high school education, making it difficult to seek employment.

2. Material Hardships

In addition to poverty, most EFAS clients experience material hardships such as homelessness, lack of access to facilities to prepare or store food, and lack of transportation. On average, kitchen clients experience more severe hardships compared to pantry clients. Three-fourths of kitchen clients lack their own means of transportation, compared with half of pantry client households. Transportation problems are often cited as barriers to getting emergency food, but transportation is also a barrier for seeking employment, general assistance, or food stamp benefits (Food and Nutrition Service 2001). For the longer-term unemployed, barriers to work often include health and transportation problems and the cost of child care (Nichols-Casebolt and Morris 2001).

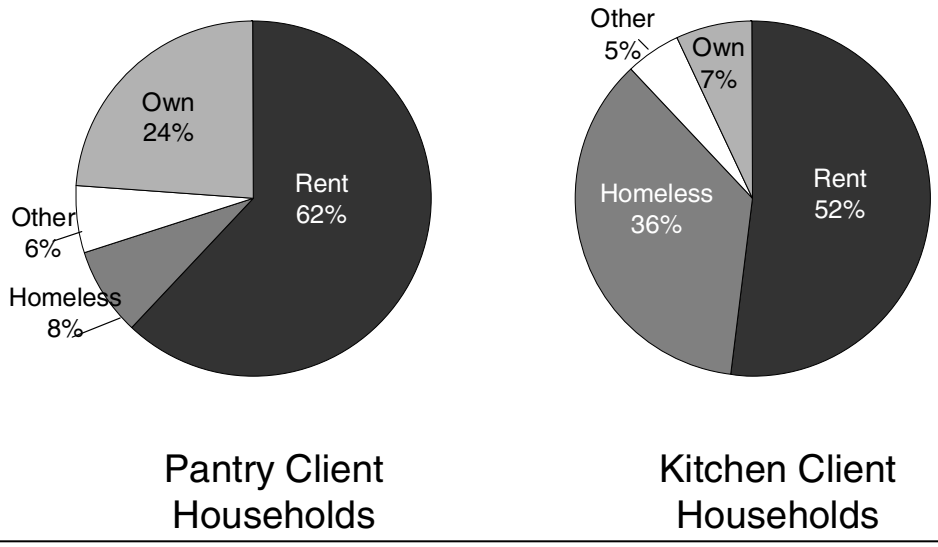
Eight percent of pantry client households and 36 percent of kitchen clients are homeless (see Figure V.2).[3] In a national study of homeless assistance programs, Burt et al. (1999) found that

[3]Among America's Second Harvest network clients, three percent of pantry clients and 26 percent of kitchen clients considered themselves homeless (Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001.) The EFAS Client Survey uses the federal definition of homelessness, which includes clients who consider themselves homeless or who live in locations not intended to serve as permanent housing.

food pantries are the most numerous type of homeless assistance program, providing services to homeless individuals and families, particularly in rural areas. Other important homeless assistance programs, in order of the number of programs in the U.S. are shelters, transitional housing, and emergency kitchens (Burt et al. 1999). The EFAS Provider Survey found that 13 percent of pantries provided housing counseling and 24 percent of kitchens provided shelter to clients (Ohls et al. 2001).

FIGURE V.2

RESIDENTIAL STATUS OF EFAS CLIENTS



3. Food Insecurity and Hunger

Overall food insecurity among the population who use EFAS services is high: 79 percent of pantry client households and 75 percent of kitchen client households. About 42 percent of pantry client households and 48 percent of kitchen clients are classified as food insecure with hunger. In contrast, the most recent national estimate of food insecurity with hunger, using the standard 18-

item food security measurement in the September 2000 Current Population Survey (CPS), is 11 percent of low-income households (Nord et al. 2002).[4]

About 41 percent of kitchen clients and 26 percent of pantry client households report that one or more adults had gone without eating for a whole day in the last 12 months, representing the most severe classification of food insecurity with hunger and a mechanism used by families to protect children from food insecurity and hunger, and common among homeless clients. The figure for kitchen clients (41 percent) is comparable to that found for adults visiting homeless assistance programs: 40 percent said that they went one or more days in the last 30 days without food to eat because they could not afford food (Burt et al. 1999).

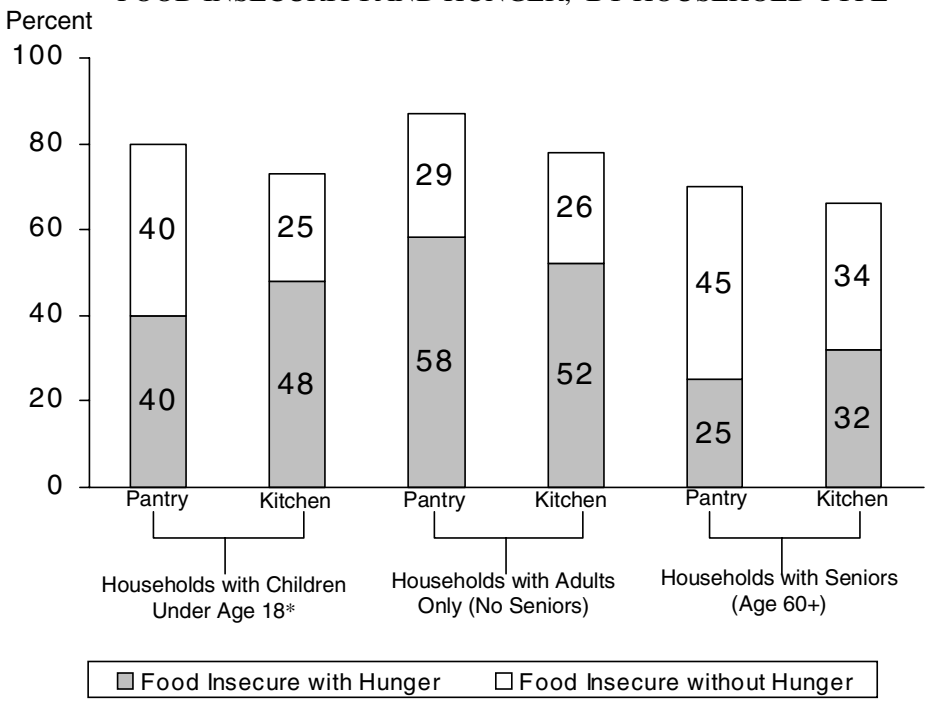
Food insecurity with hunger was most common (48 percent) among kitchen client households with children (see Figure V.3). Food insecurity with hunger was less common (25 percent) among pantry client households with seniors, which might indicate that older people are reluctant to admit to having food security problems or that seniors have access to a strong set of other safety net programs to protect them from poverty and food insecurity. Among Food Stamp Program (FSP) participants in EFAS, 82 percent and 78 percent of pantry and kitchen clients households, respectively, are food insecure, a higher rate than that reported nationally for FSP participants (50 percent, in Cohen et al. 1999).[5] Among EFAS clients who are also FSP participants, rates for food insecurity with hunger (44 percent of pantry client households and 55 percent of kitchen client households) are twice as high as the rate reported for the general FSP population (22 percent) (Cohen et al. 1999).

[4]Households with income at or below 130 percent of the poverty level. The CPS is a survey of households and therefore does not include those who are homeless or tenuously housed.

[5]The National Survey of Food Stamp Program Recipients was conducted between 1994 and 1999 and used the 18-item food security measurement (Cohen et al. 1999).

FIGURE V.3

FOOD INSECURITY AND HUNGER, BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE



*14 percent of pantry households with children and 13 percent of kitchen households with children also have seniors.

4. Fair or Poor Health Status

Poor health or disability (mental or physical) can affect the ability to seek emergency food assistance, and yet indicates an even greater need for adequate and appropriate food consumption. The EFAS client survey indicates poorer health status among EFAS users compared to other people in poverty in the U.S. About 54 percent of pantry clients and 41 percent of kitchen clients reported that they were in 'fair or poor health'[6] compared to 32 percent of poor women and 31 percent of poor men in the general population.[7] Poor women report more severe health problems compared to poor men, which explains a higher proportion of 'fair or

[6]Self-reported health is used as a broad indicator of health and well-being and has been shown to be a reliable indicator of a person's overall health status (Pamuk et al. 1998).

[7]Poor is defined as below the poverty level; estimates are based on data from the National Health Interview Survey.

poor health' among pantry respondents, who are typically women picking up food packages for the household. Similar findings of self-reported health status were reported by Second Harvest network clients (Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001).

5. Accessibility and Client Satisfaction with EFAS Providers

EFAS serves clients with short-term and long-term needs and most clients are able to get food from EFAS providers when they need it. When clients cannot get food from EFAS providers, it is usually because they have transportation problems or did not arrive on time. Indeed, most (over 90 percent of) EFAS clients who visit providers are highly satisfied with the amount and variety of meals or food they receive.

Consistent with evidence from other sources, such as America's Second Harvest study (Kim, Ohls, and Cohen 2001), the EFAS survey indicates high levels of client satisfaction with the quantity and variety of food received from emergency kitchens and food pantries. Clear majorities of clients are "very satisfied" with the amount and variety of food they receive at pantries and kitchens, and more than 90 percent of clients are either "very satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with the food they receive. While some significant variations exist in client satisfaction by race/ethnicity and other client characteristics, most clients appear to be satisfied with the food they receive from the provider they visited on the day of the interview.

6. Faith-based Services

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) play an important role in providing emergency food and housing assistance to needy individuals and families. Two-thirds of EFAS providers are affiliated with faith-based organizations (Ohls et al. 2001). Organizations such as Catholic Charities have conducted surveys to document and report increases in requests for local aid following welfare reform legislation (Catholic Charities 2000). The survey of EFAS kitchen and

pantry providers and their clients provides important evidence on FBOs provision of nutritional assistance to the poor. The EFAS survey includes questions on provider affiliations with religious organizations as well as client perceptions of provider-sponsored religious activities.

About three-fifths of EFAS pantry and kitchen clients receive services from a provider affiliated with Catholic Charities, the Salvation Army, or some other religious organization and which could thereby be classified as "faith-based." Pantry respondents visiting a pantry run by an FBO are somewhat more likely to be asked to participate in religious activities than are pantry respondents visiting a pantry not run by an FBO. Among emergency kitchen clients, however, the likelihood of being asked to participate in religious activities does not vary significantly according to whether the kitchen is run by an FBO. Overall, about one in three kitchen clients and about one in seven pantry respondents are asked to participate in religious activities. Of those clients asked to participate in religious activities, about two-thirds report they are "very comfortable" with these activities, while only 1 in 10 say they are "uncomfortable" or "very uncomfortable" with them.

B. USE OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Although the U.S. Congress budgeted $37 billion for domestic nutrition programs in fiscal year 2002 (USDA Office of Budget and Program Analysis 2002), these programs do not appear to serve all the food needs of low-income individuals. For a variety of reasons, many low-income or otherwise needy people turn to private organizations for short- or long-term food assistance, either in addition to, or instead of, participation in public food assistance programs. The survey of pantry and kitchen users sheds light on the reasons clients seek EFAS services, the diverse sources of food assistance for these needy individuals, and the reasons for not participating in public nutrition programs. Overall, 93 percent of pantry client households and 86 percent of kitchen clients have household incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty

level in the month before their EFAS visit, an indicator that they are likely to be eligible for public assistance programs.

The client survey inquired about participation in seven public food assistance programs: the Food Stamp Program; the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children; the School Breakfast Program; the National School Lunch Program; the Summer Food Service Program; nutrition programs for the elderly; and child care and Head Start feeding programs. About one-fifth (22 percent) of pantry client households rely on food pantries for assistance without seeking additional support from one of these public programs or from other forms of EFAS, in this case, kitchens or shelters (Figure V.4). A similar fraction of kitchen client households relies on soup kitchens for assistance without using public food assistance programs or pantries or shelters. Nine percent of pantry client households, and 34 percent of kitchen client households, rely on food from multiple forms of EFAS but not on public food assistance programs. About two-thirds (69 percent) of pantry client households and nearly half (45 percent) of kitchen client households rely on at least one of the aforementioned public food assistance programs. Among pantry and kitchen households eligible for one or more public programs, about three-quarters participate in at least one program, and about one-half participate in two or more programs (Figure V.5).

Despite the fact that a majority of pantry client households, and nearly half of kitchen client households, are receiving support from public programs, the EFAS client surveys suggest that a majority of clients favor private food assistance over public programs. Seven of every 10 pantry respondents indicate that they prefer private assistance over a government program, and 2 of every 3 kitchen clients indicate such a preference. About 36 percent of pantry respondents and 41

FIGURE V.4

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION OF CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS,
BY TYPE OF EFAS PROVIDER

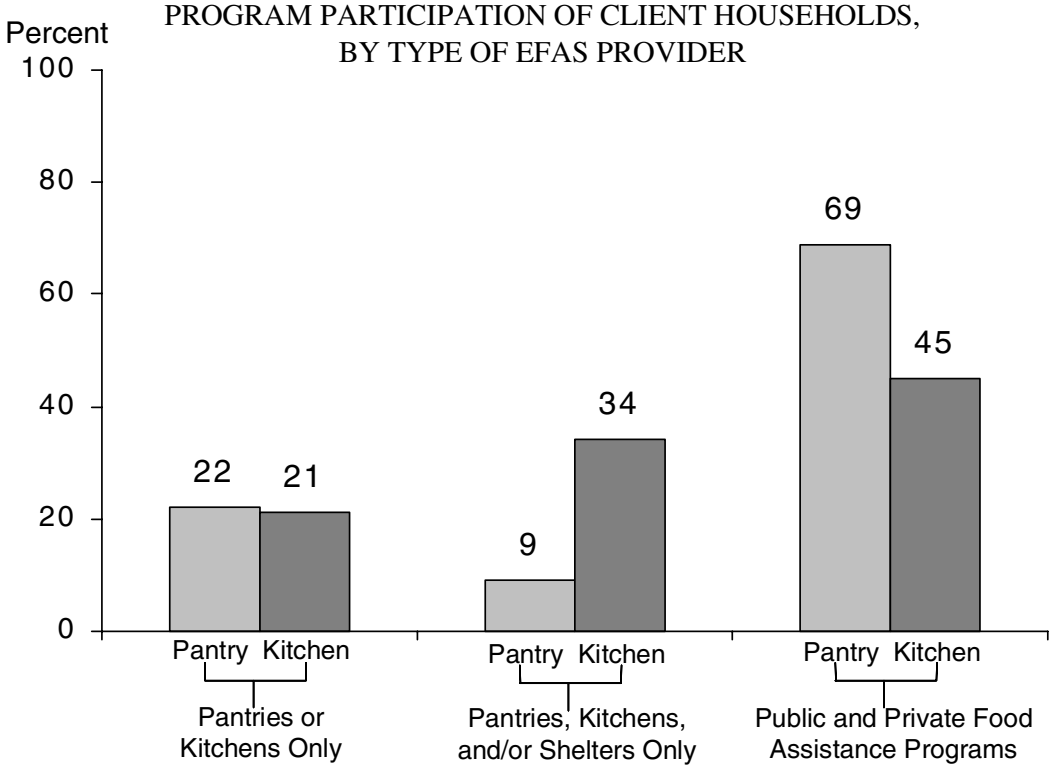
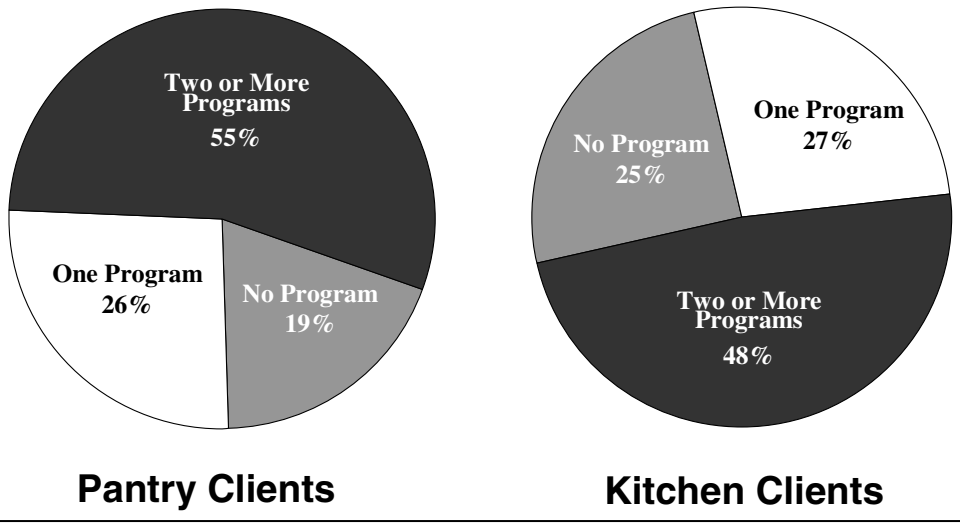


FIGURE V.5

PARTICIPATION IN FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
(ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS)



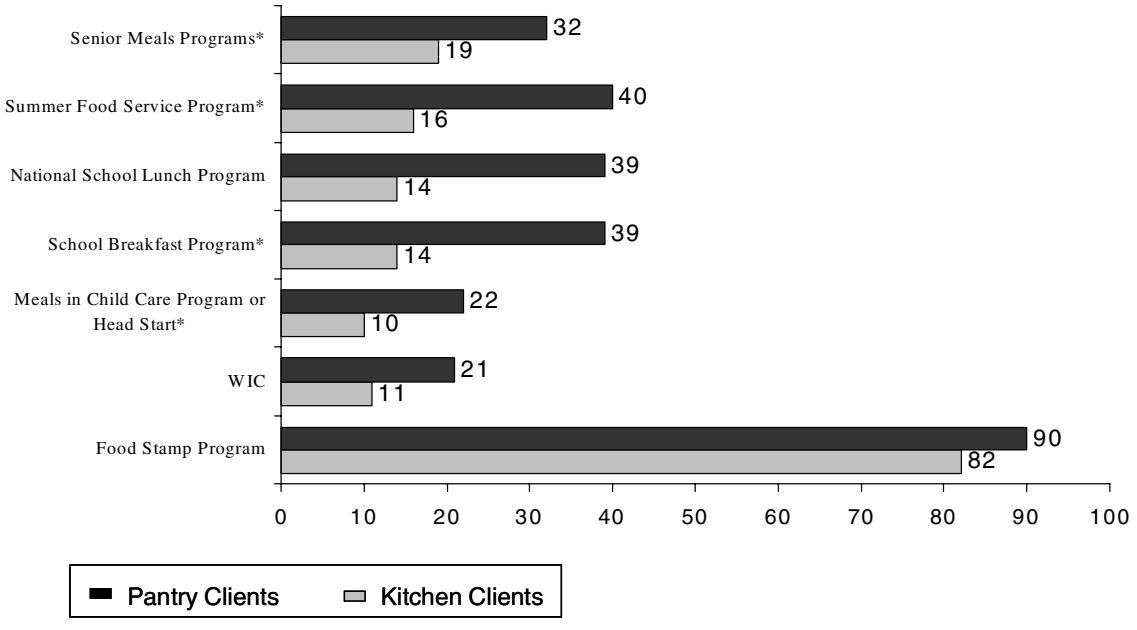
percent of kitchen clients indicate that problems with food stamps or welfare were factors in their seeking and using EFAS services. Nonetheless, as noted below, more EFAS clients rely on the Food Stamp Program than on any other government nutrition assistance program.

1. Use of the Food Stamp Program by EFAS Clients

The Food Stamp Program (FSP) is by far the largest of government food assistance programs, accounting for more than half ($21 billion) of federal food assistance program funding appropriated for fiscal year 2002. About half (48 percent) of pantry client households receive food stamps, compared with about one-third (36 percent) of kitchen client households. Eligibility for food stamps is substantially higher among EFAS pantry and kitchen clients than is eligibility for any other public food assistance program (Figure V.6). Among seemingly eligible households, 55 percent of pantry client households receive food stamps, similar to the nationwide participation rate of 59 percent in 2000 (Cunnyngham 2002), but only 44 percent of eligible kitchen client households receive FSP benefits.

FIGURE V.6

ELIGIBILITY FOR PUBLIC FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (PERCENT)



*Program not available in all areas.

Why do many EFAS client households (particularly kitchen client households) not receive the food stamp benefits for which they appear eligible? In many instances, it appears that household members have unproven doubts about their eligibility for FSP benefits. Among seemingly eligible pantry households that have not received food stamps during the last year, only 7 percent say they had applied for food stamps and had been turned down. Among the remaining households, 47 percent say they have not applied for food stamps because they think they do not qualify for benefits. Among seemingly eligible kitchen clients who have not received food stamps during the last year, only 12 percent say they had applied for food stamps and had been turned down. Among the remaining households, 36 percent say they have not applied for food stamps because they think they do not qualify for benefits. Nationally, most non-participating FSP-eligible households, including those who previously participated in the program, did not apply for assistance due to doubts about their eligibility (Ponza et al. 1999). There is also evidence that EFAS clients may have experienced a recent drop in income (since current average income is less than average monthly income in the last year), and that EFAS providers play an important role in meeting the immediate food needs of people who have experienced a drop in income.

About 11 percent, and 14 percent, of pantry and kitchen client households, respectively, received food stamps during the last year, but had not received benefits in the most recent month. About one-quarter (26 percent) of pantry client households that formerly received food stamps had been turned down for benefits during the last year, the most common reason being that household income was too high (55 percent of households affected). About 21 percent of kitchen client households that formerly received food stamps had been turned down for benefits during the last year, the most common reason being failure to comply with work requirements (46 percent of households affected). Thus, to the extent that FSP-related work requirements for

Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWDs) adopted in conjunction with the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act have affected EFAS clients, it appears that this effect is more prevalent among adult kitchen clients than among members of pantry client households.

2. Use of the Child Nutrition Programs by EFAS Clients

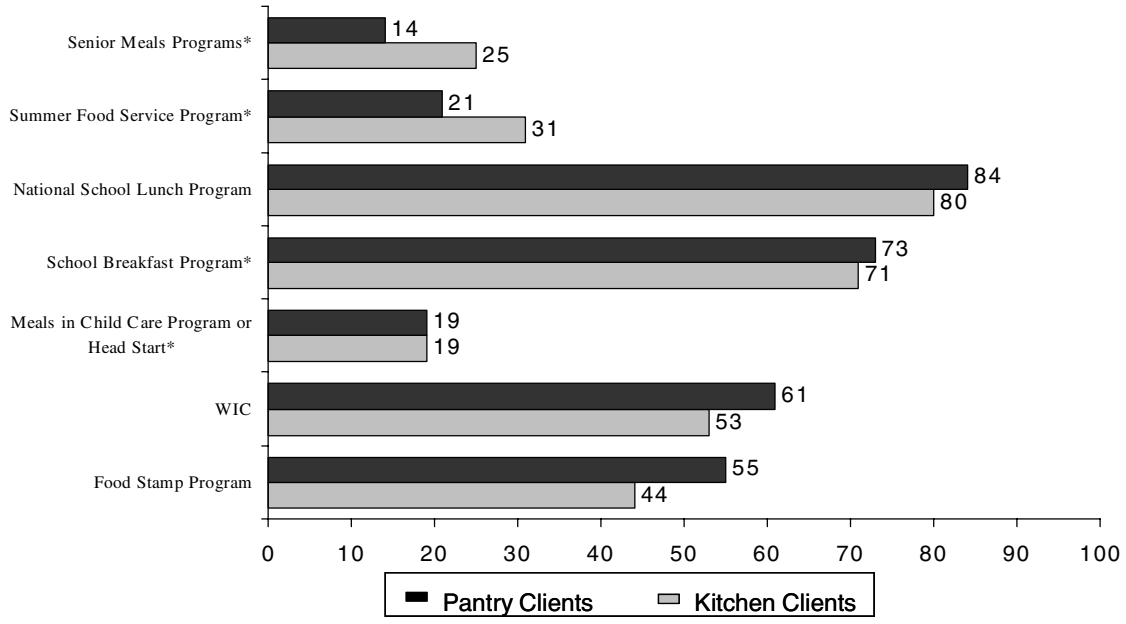
Congress appropriated $11 billion for child nutrition programs during FY 2002, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Special Milk, and Child and Adult Care Food Programs. In addition, Congress appropriated $4.3 billion for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), which serves pregnant women, nonbreastfeeding postpartum women, breastfeeding women, infants, and young children. While fewer EFAS clients participate in each of these programs than in the Food Stamp Program, participation rates of seemingly eligible households tend to be somewhat higher than the corresponding FSP participation rates. For the NSLP, 84 percent of eligible food pantry households and 80 percent of eligible kitchen client households receive free or reduced-price meals (Figure V.7). For the SBP, 73 percent of eligible food pantry households and 71 percent of eligible kitchen client households receive free or reduced-price meals.

For WIC, 61 percent of eligible food pantry households and 53 percent of eligible kitchen client households receive benefits. Both of these participation rates are lower than the 81 percent national participation rate of eligible individuals in WIC (http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/FAQs/FAQ.HTM#4, accessed on July 3, 2002). Only for the Summer Food Service Program are participation rates of eligible households somewhat lower than for the Food Stamp Program: 21 percent for eligible pantry households and 31 percent for

eligible kitchen client households. Most EFAS clients say that they are not aware of the SFSP, which is not available in all areas of the nation.

FIGURE V.7

PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
(AMONG ELIGIBLE HOUSEHOLDS)--PERCENT



*Program not available in all areas.

When seemingly eligible pantry and kitchen client households do not participate in the NSLP or WIC, it is most often because household members do not think they are eligible for these programs. Respondents for 23 percent of pantry client households and for 24 percent of kitchen client households cite this reason for the NSLP. Respondents for 56 percent of pantry client households and 48 percent of kitchen client households cite this reason for WIC.

When seemingly eligible pantry and kitchen client households do not participate in the SBP, it is most often because the children eat breakfast at home, cited by one-third of pantry households and two-fifths of kitchen client households. However, it is not known whether or not the SBP was offered in the child's school or whether or not they were even aware of the

program. When seemingly eligible pantry and kitchen client households do not participate in the SFSP, it is most often because they do not know about the program or its location. This reason is cited by nearly half of EFAS clients (47 percent of both pantry and kitchen client households).

If policymakers desire to increase the participation of eligible EFAS clients in government food assistance programs, several types of changes might be helpful. In general, it would be useful to make it easier for low-income individuals to determine if they are, in fact, eligible for public food assistance. In the case of the SBP, publicizing the benefits of school breakfasts might help increase participation in the program. In the case of the Summer Food Service Program, many more parents need to be made aware of the program's existence. Outreach efforts could also be expanded within EFAS pantries and kitchens, where at present only one in six providers offer FSP or WIC-related counseling (Ohls et al. 2001).

3. Contrasting Households with Different Program Participation Patterns

Depending on whether they rely on only one form of private food assistance (pantries or kitchens), on multiple forms of private food assistance (pantries, kitchens, and/or shelters), or on public and private food assistance programs, pantry and kitchen client households differ in terms of their demographic characteristics, income levels, and material hardships. In general, EFAS client households relying on public food assistance programs are more likely than other EFAS client households to include children under age 18. This finding is not surprising, since five of the seven public food assistance programs highlighted in the survey are targeted to children. Because they are more likely to include children than are other client households, households combining private food assistance with at least one public food assistance program also tend to be larger than households not using a public food assistance program.

Client households using either EFAS pantries or EFAS kitchens, but not other forms of private or public food assistance, often give indications of higher levels of income, and lower

levels of poverty, than other client households. This finding is consistent with the fact that most of the public food assistance programs are means-tested. Households with relatively high levels of income (such as income above 130 percent of the poverty level) are likely to be ineligible for certain programs, such as the FSP or free school breakfasts and lunches.

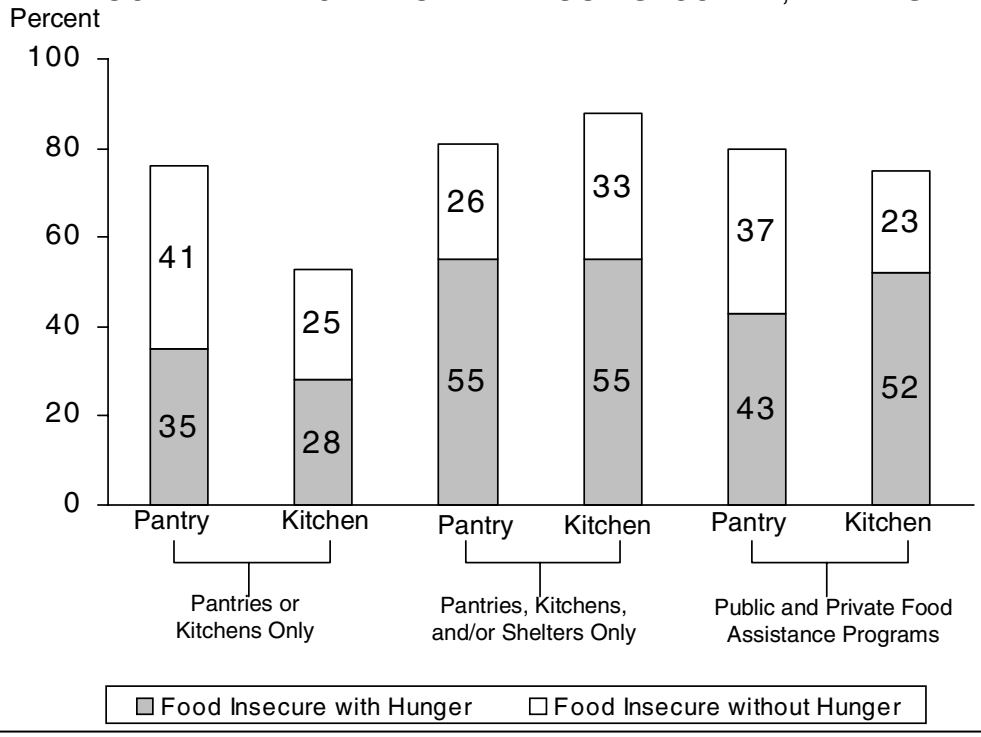
Material hardships are more severe for households using multiple forms of private food assistance with no public food assistance programs than for households using public and private food assistance programs. Households using multiple forms of EFAS—food pantries, soup kitchens, or meals served at shelters—are more likely to be homeless than are other client households. These same households are more likely to be food insecure with hunger than are other client households. For pantry and kitchen client households using multiple forms of private food assistance, over half (55 percent) are food insecure with hunger (Figure V.8). In comparison, hunger is somewhat less prevalent (43 percent) among pantry client households using public food assistance programs, and substantially less prevalent (at rates of 35 and 28 percent, respectively) among households using no public food assistance programs but rather pantries or kitchens only.

Because three-fifths of pantry client households, and four-fifths of kitchen client households, using multiple forms of private food assistance have neither children nor elderly members, the public food assistance program for which these households are most likely to be eligible is the Food Stamp Program. At least four-fifths of pantry and kitchen households using multiple forms of private food assistance appear to be eligible for the FSP. However, these eligible households are twice as likely to be convinced that they are ineligible for food stamps as are eligible households using public food assistance programs. Consequently, expanding awareness of FSP eligibility may be a key to increasing food stamp participation, and decreasing hunger, among

the highly disadvantaged households seeking food from multiple forms of emergency food assistance.

FIGURE V.8

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AND FOOD SECURITY, BY EFAS TYPE



C. STUDY LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Due to the 4-month field period and time limitations of the client survey, some important research topics could not be fully addressed in this study. First, we could not measure seasonal patterns of EFAS use over a year's time period, making it difficult to accurately estimate the numbers of people served annually by EFAS pantries and kitchens. Second, the sample design and sample sizes limit the ability to make comparisons of household characteristics and utilization patterns between clients residing in urban or in rural areas. Third, time limitations on the survey did not allow us to capture more detailed information about the number of different kitchens or pantries visited by clients or clients' past use of EFAS or federal food assistance programs for time periods longer than a year.

Additional analysis of EFAS survey data (combining provider data with client data) could be conducted to further study the interrelationships of factors related to the frequency and duration of EFAS use, client characteristics, and provider characteristics. Examples of research questions that could be addressed with additional descriptive or multivariate analysis include:

- ***EFAS provider services***: Among clients who are eligible, but not participating in public programs, what proportion of EFAS providers they visit provide referral or counseling services for federal food assistance programs such as the FSP? Among those clients who report being in fair or poor health, what services such as nutrition counseling, nutrition education, or medical referrals are provided by the providers they visit?
- ***EFAS clientele*:** Among EFAS clients who are classified as food secure, further explore the relationship between household characteristics (income, employment, and public food assistance program participation), EFAS utilization patterns, and EFAS provider characteristics.
- ***ABAWDs*:** Explore the link between waivers of FSP work requirements for able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs) and the use of EFAS services by ABAWDs. It is possible that, in states that have obtained waivers of FSP work requirements for ABAWDs, ABAWDs constitute a smaller proportion of the population using EFAS services.
- ***Food security research***: Conduct additional analysis of the individual food security questions to assess the performance of the 6-item short form in this population of EFAS users. Our initial analysis indicates that the addition of a seventh question may be useful to distinguish moderate and severe levels of food insecurity with hunger among this population.

D. SUMMARY

The emergency food assistance system serves the needs of large numbers of diverse groups in the U.S. low-income population—single-parent families, families with children, the homeless, the unemployed, the working poor, and seniors. EFAS clients experience more severe hardships in comparison to the general low-income population in the United States—they report being in fair or poor health more often, and experience higher rates of homelessness, food insecurity, and hunger. These hardships appear to be more severe for EFAS client households using multiple forms of EFAS (pantries, kitchens, and/or shelters) but not public food assistance programs, than

for client households using public food assistance programs. Still, three-quarters of households combining public and private food assistance programs experience food insecurity. Food insecurity with hunger ranges from one in four among pantry client households with seniors, to one in two among kitchen client households with children. These study findings have implications for nutrition policymaking and outreach related to public food assistance programs, and contribute to a better understanding of the role of the EFAS in providing food assistance and related services to those in poverty and need.

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APPENDIX A

SAMPLE DESIGN, SAMPLING WEIGHTS, AND ESTIMATION

This appendix describes the sampling, weighting, imputation, and estimation for the EFAS Client Survey. The sampling plan was probability-based so study results could be used to make inferences about clients in the national EFAS system. Steps involved in sample design and implementation included (1) definition of the target population, (2) construction of the sampling frame, (3) specification of sample selection procedures, (4) creation of sampling weights and adjustments for nonresponse, and (5) imputation for missing data. We also describe the methods used to estimate population totals of kitchen and pantry clients.

A. TARGET POPULATION

The target population for any survey is the entire set of population units for which the survey data will be used to make inferences. For the EFAS Client Survey, conducted in 2001, the target population was clients (households or people) who received food during the survey's data collection period from a food pantry or an emergency kitchen in the contiguous United States. "Client" was defined differently for pantries and for kitchens.

Food Pantries. The target population for the food pantry portion of the client survey included all households with at least one adult, 18 or older, receiving food packages from a food pantry, on or off site, in the contiguous United States. As described in Chapter II, the client survey used a liberal definition for "housing unit" that encompassed the types of places where homeless people reside, as well as other housing units.

Emergency Kitchens. The target population for emergency kitchens included all adults, 18 or older, receiving meals from an emergency kitchen, on or off site, in the contiguous United States. We excluded facilities that distribute food under the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP)[1] and the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP). We also excluded

[1] Formerly known as the Nutrition Program for the Elderly (NPE).

facilities for which the meals were incidental to other activities, such as substance abuse treatment facilities, summer camps, Kids' Cafés™ (an after-school feeding program sponsored by America's Second Harvest), and senior day care facilities. Similarly, we excluded kitchens co-located with shelters serving food only to residents because distributing food is secondary to providing shelter.

B. THE SAMPLING FRAME

The sampling frame for any survey is the list or other mechanism used to enumerate target population members. The EFAS Provider Survey, conducted in 2000, served as the basis for the frame for primary sampling units (PSUs) and facility selection (Ohls et al. 2001).

PSU Frame for the Provider Survey. The provider survey used an area frame composed of PSUs containing at least 4,250 people in poverty. These PSUs were nonoverlapping land areas, that in the aggregate, span the contiguous United States. The PSUs were formed as individual counties or groups of counties that met a specified minimum size constraint. Frame building began with the "county-equivalent" records from the Area Resource File (ARF) for the 48 states and the District of Columbia. The phrase, "county-equivalent" was used because of the way ARF treats independent cities (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 1998). Generally, the ARF combines independent cities with their original counties. Manassas City was combined with Prince William County, for instance. Some relatively large independent cities, however, were treated as county equivalents. Alexandria City is one such county equivalent.

In forming PSUs, and later in sample selection, the number of people living in poverty was used to define the size measure. The ideal measure would have been based on the number of EFAS pantries and kitchens, but this information was unknown. The number of EFAS facilities was not exactly proportional to the number of people living in poverty, leading to some unequal weighting in the EFAS provider sample. The minimum size constraint of 4,250 people was set

to yield at least five eligible responding pantries in each PSU and at least five emergency kitchens in urban PSUs.

Listing Providers Within Sample PSUs for the Provider Survey. For each PSU sampled for the provider survey, a sampling frame was constructed listing the pantries and kitchens in that PSU. In constructing these facility frames, we (1) compiled lists of kitchens and pantries, (2) combined and unduplicated these lists to develop a combined (but still partial) list of providers, and (3) supplemented information from the lists with extensive contacts of local sources in selected counties.

The first step was to assemble several different, partial sample frames on a state or regional basis. America's Second Harvest supplied lists of providers in its network, as extracted from databases maintained by its affiliate food banks. Similar lists were obtained from independent food banks not associated with America's Second Harvest (some of which belong to other networks). In addition, state TEFAP directors provided lists of EFAS providers that distribute TEFAP commodities.

The above lists were supplemented with extensive contacts with local collateral sources to obtain the names and locations of emergency kitchens and pantries. On average, we made 16 collateral contacts in each of the 360 areas we sampled. The types of organizations contacted included public and private social service agencies, libraries, churches, and similar organizations. Names obtained this way were compared with those already obtained for that area. We merged all this information to develop a list of the pantries and kitchens in each PSU, without duplicates.

PSU and Provider Frame for the Client Survey. The client survey was restricted to facilities responding to the provider survey from 60 of the original 360 PSUs. Unlike the provider survey, the client survey frame excluded kitchens co-located with shelters serving food to residents, and kitchens and pantries that served fewer than five clients per day. Because of

these restrictions, three PSUs from the provider survey contained no eligible providers for the client survey.

C. SAMPLE DESIGN

Sample selection for the client survey used a multistage sample design. The PSUs were the counties or a group of counties selected in the provider survey. The secondary sampling unit was the facility sampled for the provider survey. The third stage was a selected block of time within which clients were sampled for interview. At each facility, we selected the final sampling unit, a recipient of a meal or a food package.

Selection of PSUs for the Provider Survey. The provider survey used a multiple frame approach to sample design. From the area frame already described, a probability sample of 360 PSUs was selected for the provider survey, with probability proportional to the number of people living in poverty. Chromy's sequential sample selection procedure (Chromy 1979) was used to select the sample after sorting the area frame by U.S. Census region, metropolitan status, percent minority, and total population (including nonpoor and poor).[2] The controlled ordering of the PSUs produced implicit stratification of each stratum's PSUs, which ensured that sample PSUs were representative. Let $S(i)$ be the size measure associated with the i^{th} PSU. Then the expected relative frequency $n_1(i)$ with which the ith PSU was selected for the provider survey is given by

$$E[n_1(i)] = \frac{360S(i)}{S(+)}$$

[2] Serpentine ordering was used to preserve the similarity of adjacent PSUs in the ordered list.

where $S(+)$ is the sum of the size measures over all PSUs and 360 is the number of PSUs selected.[3]

Selection of Facilities for the Provider Survey. Within each PSU, separate samples of kitchens and pantries were selected with equal probability within each PSU for the provider survey. The sample sizes of pantries and kitchens were allocated to achieve sampling weights across PSUs that were as equal as possible. Constraints were placed on the minimum and maximum PSU sample sizes, however. Each sampled facility, hereafter referred to as a primary facility, was asked to report other facilities in the local area. Any such mentions were verified against our original frame, and, if unlisted, were entered as secondary facilities. Secondary facilities were given the same probability of selection as primary facilities of the same type from that PSU. Across primary and secondary facilities, a total of 3,157 kitchens and 2,532 pantries were selected, yielding completed interviews with 1,517 kitchens and 1,617 pantries.

Subsampling PSUs for the Client Survey. A total of 60 PSUs were selected for the client survey from the 360 PSUs in the provider survey. A PSU was eligible for the client survey if at least one kitchen or pantry responded to the provider survey. On average, about six kitchens and five pantries were sampled from each PSU. The actual number selected varied because not all PSUs contained five responding pantries and six responding kitchens. For clients of pantries and of kitchens, the goal of the sample design was to have equal-size client samples taken from each

[3] Note that some PSUs were large enough to be drawn with certainty and have expected relative frequencies of selection that are greater than one. These PSUs had multiple second-stage sample sizes assigned to them corresponding to the number of "hits." Consequently, the number of unique PSUs was somewhat less than the 360 sampling "hits."

sampled facility of a particular type and for sampled clients to have equal selection probabilities across facilities of that type.[4]

The provider survey had 360 selections or 294 unique PSUs, of which 292 had at least one responding eligible EFAS provider. Moreover, we excluded:

- Small providers that served fewer than five clients per day[5]
- Kitchens co-located with shelters
- Providers that went out of business or entered the EFAS since the 2000 provider survey

Furthermore, we designed a procedure to allow us to partially compensate for the very small number of providers in certain PSUs by increasing the number of providers, especially pantries, available for sampling. Some of the PSUs from the provider survey were geographically adjacent. In cases where two PSUs were adjacent and could logistically operate as one PSU, we collapsed the two PSUs into one. We collapsed 18 sets of PSUs in this manner, resulting in a list of 271 PSUs.

We selected 60 PSUs from this modified list of provider survey PSUs. In selecting the 60 PSUs for the client survey and then subsampling kitchens and pantries from these PSUs, our goal was twofold: (1) to select a sample of PSUs so that the probability of selection is proportional to the total number of the nation's clients served by that PSU, and (2) to select facilities within each PSU so that the probability of selection was proportional to the total number of that PSU's

[4] The original PSUs were selected with probability proportional to size sampling with the number of people in poverty used as the size measure. This size measure was the most appropriate one available, but was not perfectly correlated to the actual number of pantries and kitchens in the PSUs. This resulted in unequal weighting across facilities of a particular type.

[5] This resulted in the exclusion of three additional PSUs from sample consideration.

clients served by that facility. We used the sequential selection procedure that Chromy developed (Chromy 1979). We used the corresponding SAS procedure SURVEYSELECT, which has an option for Chromy's algorithm. We used a sequential sample selection procedure instead of simple random sampling to avoid the possibility of extreme concentrations of the selected sample in a few analytic domains. In selecting the sample, we sorted all PSUs according to whether the PSU contained any kitchens, U.S. Census region, urban status, and the total number of people in poverty. We then selected a PSU with a probability proportional to the number of times the PSU was selected for the provider survey sample. Selecting the PSUs proportional to this measure of size had the effect of bringing in two PSUs with certainty: Los Angeles with three "hits," and Chicago with two "hits." The final sample contained 57 unique PSUs.

Subsampling of Providers for the Client Survey. Many of the PSUs did not have at least six kitchens and at least five pantries. Moreover, 10 PSUs did not have any kitchens, and 3 PSUs did not have any pantries. If the remaining PSUs contained enough kitchens, we would ideally have selected six kitchens from each remaining PSU (50 x 6 = 300). However, as with pantries, that is not the case. Therefore, after allowing for the selection of all providers in PSUs with less than or equal to the required number (five pantries or six kitchens), the next step was to allocate the remaining sample to PSUs with more than five pantries or six kitchens. We allocated the remaining sample proportionally to the size of the PSU, where the size was the sum of the weighted provider sizes for all kitchens or pantries in a PSU. After the allocation was completed, we selected providers within each PSU with probability proportional to size using Chromy's sequential selection algorithm.

During the fielding period, weekly numbers of completed interviews suggested we may not complete the required number of pantry client interviews. To remedy this potential shortfall, we

supplemented the sample with the five pantries that were in the selected PSUs but were not selected as part of the provider sample. In the end, we did not sample pantries but took a census of pantries in the selected PSUs.

Sampling Meals and Time Periods. Lastly, using information collected in the provider survey, we selected a time period for each sampled facility in which sampling and interviewing would take place. This information included (1) the days and hours of operation, (2) the average number of clients per meal and day, and (3) whether the provider used a mobile food van or wagon to distribute food off site. The time period was a particular meal on a particular day for emergency kitchens or a four-hour period on a particular day for food pantries. The sample selection was designed so client visits to a particular type of facility (e.g., a pantry or a kitchen) would have approximately equal probabilities of selection across facilities. We allocated no more than three visits to any one provider to minimize the burden on providers.

Before the beginning of data collection, we verified during client sample frame development that the provider was available for interviewing during the sampled meal or time. If the provider was not available, a substitute meal or time period was selected. Substitution was made under the constraints that weekdays should be replaced by weekdays, weekends should be replaced by weekends, and, if at all possible, the same sample meal or time period would be substituted (see also Appendix B, Data Collection Methods).

Selection of Clients. Before the sampled time period, our interviewers contacted the facility managers of the kitchens or pantries, and let them know the time of our selected visit. Interviewers then visited the site to obtain a random sample of clients during that time period. The interviewers typically completed 7 to 16 client interviews per visit at a facility. The exact number depended on the difference between the number of clients expected during the time period and the number that actually arrived.

A few things should be noted about sampling clients. First, we conducted this study among adults, but the interviewers included children when counting and selecting people. When they were unsure of the selected person's age, they first asked if they were 18 or older before asking them to take part in the interview. If they selected someone under 18, they did not interview the child but did record this information on the client selection form. The client selection form included the following information: (1) the number of clients selected, (2) the number of clients completing the interview, (3) the number of clients refusing the interview, (4) the number of children selected (as ineligibles), (5) the number of clients selected but who were not interviewed due to mental, physical, or other conditions, (6) the total number of clients receiving services during the interview time, and (7) any unusual circumstances. This information allowed us to track interviews and weight the data appropriately. The interviewers returned a client selection form for each visit.

Sample Sizes. Across the 60 sampled PSUs and the associated census of 305 pantries and 300 sampled kitchens, we were able to schedule interviews at 180 pantries and 191 kitchens (see Table A.1). We were unable to schedule visits for a number of reasons: the provider saw fewer than five clients per day, the provider was no longer in business, or the kitchen was co-located with a homeless shelter. For 17 pantries and 7 kitchens, we did not schedule visits because we were unable to reach them to determine eligibility. Of the sampled kitchens, six were listed twice on the sampling frame, and therefore, the final sample size of kitchens was 294. The kitchen and pantry provider response rates are 88 percent and 83 percent (see Table A.2). At cooperating providers, we completed 2,425 interviews with kitchen clients and 2,397

TABLE A.1

FINAL STATUS OF PROVIDERS

Final Status	Reason for Eligibility Determination	Frequency	Percent
Food Pantries			
Eligible, visits scheduled	Eligible respondent	180	59.0
Eligible, visits not scheduled	Refusal	13	4.3
Eligible, visits not scheduled	Field period ended, eligible	12	3.9
Ineligible	No longer operating	48	15.7
Ineligible	Fewer than 5 clients/day	23	7.5
Ineligible	Pantry distributes off-site only	9	3.0
Ineligible	Open on emergency basis or holiday only	3	1.0
Eligibility unknown	Field period ended, eligibility not determined	17	5.6
TOTAL		**305**	**100**
Emergency Kitchens			
Eligible, visits scheduled	Eligible respondent	191	65.0
Eligible, visits not scheduled	Refusal	13	4.4
Eligible, visits not scheduled	Field period ended, eligible	7	2.4
Ineligible	No longer operating	31	10.5
Ineligible	Fewer than 5 clients/day	1	0.3
Ineligible	Kitchen co-located with shelter	40	13.6
Ineligible	Kitchen distributes to individual homes	1	0.3
Ineligible	Open on emergency basis or holiday only	1	0.3
Ineligible	Elderly or youth feeding program	2	0.7
Eligibility unknown	Field period ended, eligibility not determined	7	2.4
TOTAL		**294**	**100**[a]

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance Study Client Survey (2001).

[a]Individual percentages shown do not add to 100 because of rounding.

with pantry clients. The kitchen client and pantry client cooperation rates[6] are 87 percent and 84 percent, respectively. The overall response rates (the product of the provider response rate and the client cooperation rate) for kitchen clients and pantry clients are 77 percent and 70 percent, respectively.

TABLE A.2

PROVIDER RESPONSE RATES

Provider Type	Eligibility Determination Rate[a]	Cooperation Rate[b]	Response Rate
Kitchens	98%	91%	88%
Pantries	94%	88%	83%

[a]Percent of the sample of providers screened for eligibility.
[b]Percent of eligible sampled providers that cooperated with the request to schedule appointments for client interviewing.

TABLE A.3

CLIENT RESPONSE RATES

Provider Type	Provider Response Rate	Client Cooperation Rate	Client Response Rate[a]
Kitchens	88%	87%	77%
Pantries	83%	84%	70%

[a]Product of the provider response rate and the client cooperation rate.

[6]Percent of eligible sampled clients who cooperated with the request for an interview.

D. WEIGHTING

Estimates based on the client survey must account for the survey's complex sample design and for the biasing effects that nonresponse could have. We constructed sampling weights that reflect the differential selection probabilities used to sample EFAS providers across PSUs. The sampling weights for the client survey began with the sampling of PSUs and providers.

Provider Sampling Weight. The providers for the client survey were selected from 60 PSUs. Therefore, the conditional EFAS client PSU sampling weight can be expressed as:

$$CONDPSUWT(i) = \frac{60S_2(+)}{S_2(i)}$$

where $S_2(i)$ is the EFAS client size measure of the ith PSU, and $S_2(+)$ is the sum of the EFAS client size measures across all PSUs. Therefore, the weight for the providers in the EFAS client frame is:

$$FRAMEWT\ (ijk) = EFAS1\ FINAL\ WT\ (ijk) \times COND\ PSUWT\ (i)$$

where *EFAS1 FINAL WT*(ijk) is the provider survey analysis weight for the kth provider of type j from PSU i. Here, $j = 1$ for kitchens and $j = 2$ for pantries.

Next, we calculated the conditional provider weight. Many PSUs had very few providers, and we selected all providers of a given type. In those PSUs, the conditional weight for providers is 1. To avoid a shortfall of pantry client interviews, we supplemented the sample with the remaining pantries in the sampled PSUs. Hence, the conditional provider weight for all pantries is 1. For those PSUs with sufficiently large number of kitchens from which to sample, we first removed those kitchens whose size was so large that they should be sampled with certainty. The certainty kitchens have a provider conditional weight of 1. The remaining

kitchens were selected from the PSU with probability proportional to size. The conditional provider weight for these remaining providers is

$$CONDPROVWT(ik) = \frac{PROVSIZE(i+)}{n(i)\,PROVSIZE(ijk)}$$

where *PROVSIZE*(*i*+) is the sum of the size measures for the noncertainty kitchens in PSU *i, n*(*i*) is the noncertainty sample size taken from PSU *i*, and *PROVSIZE* (*ijk*) is the size measure for the k^{th} provider of provider type $j = 1$ (kitchen) in PSU *i*.

Therefore, the unconditional provider weight for the k^{th} provider of type *j* from PSU *i* is the product of the frame weight and the conditional provider weight or

$$PROVWT(ijk) = FRAMEWT(ijk) \times CONDPROVWT(ijk)$$

At this point, we had to take into account that some of the sampled providers refused to allow for EFAS client interviews. To account for nonresponse, we implemented a weighting class adjustment followed by a poststratification adjustment.

Provider Weighting Class Adjustments. Weighting class adjustments were made by partitioning the sample into groups, called weighting classes, and then adjusting the weights of responding providers within each class so they sum to the weight total for nonrespondents and respondents from that class. Implicit in the weighting class adjustment is the assumption that if the nonrespondents had responded their responses would have been distributed in the same way as the responses of the other responding providers in their class. The client survey weighting classes were defined on the basis of type of provider, urbanicity (metro county and nonmetro county), and size of provider (three level size variable as defined in Ohls et al 2001). Two nonresponse adjustment factors were calculated.

First, we adjusted the sampling weight to account for sampled providers for which eligibility status could not be determined. The first step is to define a response and eligibility indicator. Define ELIGRESP as follows:

ELIGRESP =	1	sampled provider was identified as eligible, visits scheduled
	2	sampled provider was identified as eligible, no visits scheduled
	3	sampled provider was identified as ineligible
	4	eligibility status of the sampled provider was not identified

Note that codes 1, 2, and 3 imply that eligibility status was known, and the case was a respondent for eligibility determination. The eligibility determination adjustment $ADJ_{ed}(c)$ for respondents in weighting class c is defined as follows:

$$ADJ_{ed}(c) = \frac{\sum_{ijk \in c} PROVWT(ijk)}{\sum_{ijk \in c} \delta_{ed}(ijk)\, PROVWT(ijk)}$$

where $\delta_{ed}(ijk)$ is equal to 1 for providers where eligibility was determined and 0 otherwise. Note that eligibility determination for nonrespondents has $\delta_{ed}(ijk) = 0$ and hence an eligibility determination adjustment of 0.

Second, we adjusted for the loss of interviews from providers known to be eligible but refused to allow for EFAS client interviewing. The nonresponse adjustment $ADJ_{nr}(c)$ for respondents in weighting class c is defined as follows:

$$ADJ_{nr}(c) = \frac{\sum_{ijk \in c} PROVWT(ijk)}{\sum_{i \in c} \delta_{nr}(ijk)\, PROVWT(ijk)}$$

where $\delta_{nr}(ijk)$ is equal to 1 for providers who agreed to interviewing and 0 otherwise. Note that nonrespondents have $\delta_{nr}(ijk) = 0$ and hence a nonresponse adjustment of 0. Ineligible providers were defined to have a nonresponse adjustment of 1. The adjustments $ADJ_{ed}(c)$ and $\underline{ADJ}_{nr}(c)$

were then applied to the provider weights to obtain the nonresponse adjusted provider weight *NRADJ_PROVWT*(*cijk*) for the *ijk*th case from the *c*th weighting class as follows:

$$NRADJ\_PROVWT(cijk) = \delta_{ed}(ijk)\, ADJ_{ed}(c) \times \delta_{nr}(ijk)\, ADJ_{nr}(c) \times PROVWT(ijk)$$

Lastly, we implemented a poststratification adjustment, a common technique for adjusting survey data using external data from a sampling frame, census, or survey of higher accuracy. This technique is commonly used to reduce bias because of nonresponse and under- or overcoverage for survey data. For these data, we poststratified to the weight provider totals from the provider survey having excluded those providers ineligible for the client survey. We again created classes and, in this case, the classes were defined on the basis of type of provider and urbanicity. The poststratification adjustment $ADJ_{post}(h)$ for respondents in poststratum *h* is defined as follows:

$$ADJ_{post}(h) = \frac{\sum_{ijk \in h} PS\_PROVWT(ijk)}{\sum_{ijk \in h} NRADJ\_PROVWT(ijk)}$$

where *PS_PROVWT* is the weight from the provider survey, which is the client survey sampling frame. The adjustment ADJ_{post} was then applied to the nonresponse adjusted provider weight to obtain the poststratified provider weight *POST_PROVWT*(*hijk*) for the *ijk*th case from the *h*th poststratum as follows:

$$POST\_PROVWT(hijk) = ADJ_{post}(h) \times NRADJ\_PROVWT(hijk)$$

Client Sampling Weight. To continue toward the development of a client weight, we made a visit-level adjustment to the provider weight. To account for the number of visits to a provider, each provider weight was adjusted by the inverse of the number of visits made resulting in the visit adjusted provider weight:

$$VISIT\_PROVWT(ijk) = \frac{POST\_PROVWT(ijk)}{v}$$

where v is the number of visits made the ijk^{th} provider. The number of visits ranged from one to a maximum of three.

For each visit, the interviewer recorded the total number of clients sampled (including ineligibles and nonrespondents) and the total number of clients served during the interview period (meal or four-hour time period). The conditional client weight is the total number of clients served divided by the total number sampled:

$$COND\_CLIENTWT(ijkl) = \frac{C(ijkl)}{c(ijkl)}$$

where $c(ijkl)$ is the total number of clients sampled, and $C(ijkl)$ is the total number of clients served during the interview period on the l^{th} visit for the ijk^{th} provider. The unconditional client weight is the product of this conditional weight and the visit adjusted provider weight or:

$$CLIENTWT(ijkl) = VISIT\_PROVWT(ijk) \times COND\_CLIENTWT(ijkl)$$

Furthermore, similar to providers, we implemented a nonresponse adjustment. Within the ijk^{th} provider for the l^{th} visit, we calculate an adjustment so the weights of responding clients sum to the weight total for nonrespondents and respondents or:

$$ADJ_{nr}(ijkl) = \frac{\sum_{ijk \in l} CLIENTWT(ijk)}{\sum_{ijk \in l} \delta_{nr}(ijk)\, CLIENWT(ijk)}$$

where $\delta_{ed}(ijkl)$ is equal to 1 for responding clients and 0 otherwise. Note that nonrespondents have $\delta_{ed}(ijkl) = 0$ and a nonresponse adjustment of 0. Ineligible clients are defined to have a nonresponse adjustment of 1. The nonresponse adjusted client weight is the product of this adjustment and the unconditional client weight or:

$$NR\_CLIENTWT(ijkl) = \delta_{nr}(ijkl)\, ADJ_{nr}(ijkl) \times CLIENTWT(ijkl)$$

The next step of the client weighting process moved us toward a weekly weight, which differs for pantry and kitchen clients. At kitchens, we asked the operators how many meals per week they serve. We then multiplied the client weight by the number of meals per week to represent clients served at all meals per week.

$$WK\_CLIENTWT(ijkl) = NR\_CLIENTWT(ijkl) \times m(ijk)$$

where $m(ijk)$ is the number of meals served per week at the ijk^{th} kitchen.

At pantries, we had information on how many people were served on the day of interviewing and the number of days the pantry is open per week. Therefore, we computed a ratio (number of people served that day/number of people served during the interview period) to adjust the weight to represent all of the clients served that day or:

$$ADJ_{day}(ijkl) = \frac{D(ijkl)}{C(ijkl)}$$

where $D(ijkl)$ is the total number of clients served that day on the l^{th} visit for the ijk^{th} provider, and $C(ijkl)$ is the total number of clients served during the interview period (four-hour time period) on the l^{th} visit for the ijk^{th} provider. We then multiplied the day weight by the day adjustment and the number of days open per week, $d(ijk)$, to present clients served per week.

$$WK\_CLIENTWT(ijkl) = NR\_CLIENTWT(ijkl) \times ADJ_{day}(ijkl) \times d(ijk)$$

Lastly, we needed to adjust the weekly client weights to represent unique people. We used the client's response to question A3 (How many different times in the past seven days did you receive groceries from this or any other food pantry?) at pantries, and A7 and A7c (A7: Including the meal that you have just received, how many meals do you expect to receive today?

A7c: Counting today, on how many of the last seven days did you receive one or more meals from this or any other kitchen?) at kitchens. The inverse of the number of times in the last week, $w(ijklm)$, is used to compute the unique pantry client adjustment factor:

$$ADJ_{unq}\left(ijklm\right)=\frac{1}{w\left(ijklm\right)}$$

The inverse of the product of the number of meals today, $d(ijklm)$, and the number of times in the last week, $w(ijklm)$, is used to compute the unique weekly kitchen client adjustment factor:

$$ADJ_{unq}\left(ijklm\right)=\frac{1}{d\left(ijklm\right)}\times\frac{1}{w\left(ijklm\right)}$$

The adjustment ADJ_{unq} is then applied to the week client weight to obtain the unique client week weight $UNQ\_WK\_CLIENTWT(ijklm)$ for the m^{th} client at the ijk^{th} provider on the l^{th} visit as follows:

$$UNQ\_WK\_CLIENTWT\left(ijklm\right)=WK\_CLIENTWT\left(ijkl\right)\times ADJ_{unq}\left(ijklm\right)$$

The unique weekly client weight is the analysis weight for both pantry and kitchen clients.

E. IMPUTATION

There was considerable item nonresponse on two questions asked of pantry clients because of a skip pattern problem in the questionnaire. Because the information from these two questions was required for estimating the total number of clients served, it was necessary to impute the missing items. The two questions were: (1) A4: In the months that you received groceries from a food pantry, how many times per month did you receive them? and (2) A5: In the last year,

during how many months did you receive groceries from this or any other food pantry?[7] These two questions were asked only of pantry clients.

We imputed values for missing items by using a sequential hot deck imputation procedure (Fellegi and Holt 1976; Cox 1980). First, we identified variables to use in the classing and sorting sets. We used cross tabulations to determine which variables were correlated with the two variables to be imputed. We determined that race/ethnicity and employment status were correlated with the two variables. Second, the file was sorted by race/ethnicity, sex, and employment status. Although sex is not correlated with the two variables to be imputed, we considered it a necessary sorting variable for face validity. Third, we constructed imputation cells composed of a two-level collapsed version of race/ethnicity: "white non-Hispanic" and "all others." Within an imputation cell, we imputed values for missing items using actual survey responses from donors with complete data. Moreover, the algorithm imputed pairs of data, that is, both imputed values came from the same donor. We evaluated the distribution of both variables before and after imputation. The imputed values had no appreciable effect on the distributions of either variable.

F. ESTIMATION OF POPULATION TOTALS OF CLIENTS SERVED

We developed weekly estimates of the number of people served by kitchens or pantries. Our estimates were predominantly based on the design-based analysis weight, which was built on the probabilities of selection, the sample design, and corresponding statistical adjustments. Our operational definition of the population excluded clients at small providers, clients at kitchens co-located with a shelter, and providers no longer in operation or new entrants to EFAS.

[7] This second question was not used directly for estimation. However, because imputation for A5 was required, we imputed A4 simultaneously.

The population of interest was all clients served by all kitchens and pantries, regardless of size or situation. Because our operational definition of the population differed from the population of interest, we attempted to compensate for the shortfall with additional adjustments and extrapolations.

The estimation process relied on several data sources to derive estimates of the population total. These included:

- Information from the provider survey conducted in 2000
- Information from the sampling and data collection operations concerning observed numbers of clients served by providers and the providers' days of operation
- Information from the data collection operation on the reason a provider was ineligible for the client survey
- Information from clients related to their frequency and duration of visits to any pantry or any kitchen

Our basic approach to deriving weekly estimates of clients served was to start with the design-based estimates of clients served per week and then apply a number of adjustment factors and extrapolations to arrive at the estimate of the population of inference. However, we believe that error sources existed in extrapolating from the operational definition of the population to the population of interest and that these errors may have been large.

To adjust for the various sources of error, we calculated several adjustment factors. Each adjustment factor was calculated separately, by type, within urban and rural areas. To adjust the design-based weighted total number of clients, we applied each of these adjustment factors to the provider weight. Using this adjusted provider pseudo-weight, we calculated an adjusted client

pseudo-weight and the total number of clients under the analytic population definition.[8] These factors included:

- An adjustment to represent providers not located in the PSU during the provider survey
- An adjustment to represent providers that were no longer in business
- An adjustment factor to represent providers open very infrequently
- An adjustment factor to account for kitchens co-located with shelters

The first adjustment factor accounted for an adjustment made to the total number of providers estimated from the provider survey. The initial sample frame for the provider survey was an incomplete list of providers in the PSUs. To account for the undercoverage, we collected "secondary" sample providers identified during interviewing. Because secondary sample cases were not listed in the original sample frame, the sample weights did not fully reflect these providers. Therefore, an adjustment was added to the total number of kitchens and pantries (see Ohls et al. 2001 for more details). The adjustment factor for kitchen clients was the total number of kitchens with the secondary adjustment divided by the total number of kitchens based on sample weights. The adjustment factor for pantry clients was the total number of pantries with the secondary adjustment divided by the total number of pantries based on sample weights.

The second adjustment factor accounted for providers that were no longer in business. We assumed a steady state existed in the number of EFAS providers. That is, for each provider that went out of business, another provider opened its doors. This adjustment also assumed the distribution of providers remained constant, whether across geographic regions, type of sponsor, and any of a number of provider characteristics. The adjustment factor was the sum of the

[8] After these ratio adjustments, the provider and client weights were no longer design-based

provider weights for responding and out-of-business providers, divided by the sum of the provider weights for responding providers. This adjustment then increased the pseudo-weights of the responding providers to represent the out-of-business providers.

The third adjustment factor accounted for providers that are open only on holidays or for emergencies or provided food or groceries off site only. The adjustment factor was the sum of the provider weights for responding providers, providers open only on holiday or for emergencies, and providers that serve off site only divided by the sum of the provider weight for responding providers. When applied to the pseudo-weight, this adjustment allowed the responding providers to represent those providers that were open infrequently.

The fourth adjustment factor accounted for kitchens co-located with shelters for the homeless. We assumed the kitchens co-located with shelters were similar in size to those not co-located with shelters. The adjustment factor was the sum of the provider weights for responding providers and kitchens co-located with shelters divided by the sum of the provider weights for responding providers. A similar adjustment factor was calculated to adjust for the kitchens co-located with shelters that we excluded from the EFAS client sampling frame. In the case of the frame adjustment factor, we used the final EFAS provider weights to calculate the ratio. These factors, when applied to the pseudo-weight, permitted the responding providers to represent the kitchens co-located with shelters.

(continued)
weights. Therefore, we label them pseudo-weights.

In addition to these adjustment factors, we estimated the total number of clients excluded because of the operational definition of the population.[9] Moreover, if we learned that a sampled provider served fewer than five clients in a day, we considered them to be ineligible.

To estimate the number of clients served by these small providers, we used information from the provider survey. We assumed that each small provider served four people each day it was open. Using the reported number of days open per week from the provider survey (Ohls et al. 2001), we calculated a weighted number of clients from small providers. The number of clients estimated from small providers was added to the total derived from the factor adjustments.

The survey instrument focused on weekly usage of both kitchens and pantries. While it might have seemed reasonable to describe the total number of kitchen clients in a typical week, the patterns of pantry usage led us to estimate a monthly total. To estimate that, we calculated an adjustment factor for each responding pantry client:

Monthly adjustment factor = 4 / number of weeks per month

The number of weeks per month is a constructed variable based on question A5 (In the months that you or another member of your household received groceries from a food pantry, how many times per month did you receive them?). The construction is shown in Table A.4.

[9] To simplify data collection, we did not include in the sampling frame any providers serving fewer than five clients in a day.

TABLE A.4

MONTHLY ADJUSTMENT FACTOR

How Often Client Received Groceries	
Number of Times per Month	Number of Weeks per Month
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5 or greater	4

This adjustment factor assumed, for example, if a client received groceries twice per month, then the client received these groceries in two different weeks. This monthly adjustment factor was applied to the adjusted client pseudo-weight to estimate the total number of different clients served by pantries in a typical month.

The last step in estimating the total number of clients served was to estimate the annual number. We did not derive the annual estimate by simply multiplying the monthly number by 12, which would assume that an entirely new set of clients is served each month, nor did we set the annual estimate equal to the monthly number, which would assume that no new clients are served each month. We constructed the potential range of possible numbers of different clients annually by examining the implications of alternative estimates of turnover in the system, where we defined turnover as the average percentage of the clientele that were "new" each month in the sense of not having used a pantry in the previous 12 months. If, for example, in food pantries, we assume that this turnover rate is only 4 percent per month, this would imply that the annual number of different clients is 18.0 million. That is, the estimate for number of clients served in a month (12.5 million), plus 4 percent of that total (500,000) each month for 11 months (or 5.5 million) (or 12.5 million + 5.5 million = 18.0 million). On the other hand, if, we assume a monthly turnover rate of 8 percent of the caseload, this would imply that the annual number of

different clients is 23.5 million. That is, the estimate for number of clients served in a month (12.5 million), plus 8 percent of that total (1,000,000) each month for 11 months (or 12.5 million + 11.0 million = 23.5 million).

As noted in chapters three and four, the study design limits our ability to precisely measure patterns of use over a year and estimate the total number of households and clients served by food pantries and emergency kitchens during 2001. First, data were collected for a 14-week period rather than for a year's period so the survey data do not reflect seasonal patterns of food pantry usage. Second, while we collected a limited amount of data about clients' use of pantries and kitchens for the previous 12 months, space limitations on the instrument precluded obtaining all the data necessary to fully characterize annual usage. Also, these data may contain considerable measurement error in clients' abilities to accurately report the number of months in the past 12 months that they visited a food pantry or the number of weeks in a row that they had visited one or more kitchens during the past year.

APPENDIX B

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

This appendix describes the survey operations used to collect data for the EFAS Client Survey. The survey work had four components: (1) instrument development, (2) contacting selected providers to schedule visits to interview clients, (3) sampling and interviewing clients on site, and (4) reviewing and editing raw survey data files before analysis. Each of these components is discussed below. Copies of the data collection forms described in this appendix (provider verification forms, survey instrument, client selection forms, and the Spanish translation card) can be found in the EFAS Client Survey Data File Documentation and Data Collection Instruments (Dawson et al. 2002).

1. Instrument Development Process

The survey instrument was designed to meet the study's research objectives, described in Chapter I, be applicable to both emergency kitchen and food pantry clients so that one survey instrument could be used, and be administered by telephone or in-person (with hard copy) within 15 minutes. We reviewed a number of sources of survey instruments to develop and adapt survey questions for the target population, including the "Study of the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program," "Reaching the Working Poor and Poor Elderly Survey," the "1999 and 2000 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) Questionnaire and Examination Components," the "2000 National Health Interview Survey," "Hunger Survey—Alameda County Food, Shelter, and Medical Care Survey," "America's Second Harvest Client Survey", and the "National Food Stamp Program Survey."

a. Survey Pretests

The first pretest was conducted in December 2000 at two food pantries and two emergency kitchens in New Jersey. The primary emphasis was testing the instrument for readability, respondents' ability to understand it, question sequencing, skip logic, and survey length. We

also assessed each facility's environment to develop guidelines for interviewers to implement a systematic sampling approach in these settings. Interviews were conducted testing two modes—cellular telephones and in-person interviews—with nine pantry clients and nine kitchen clients. We also provided the $10 financial incentive and concluded that it did facilitate getting higher response rates. The first draft instrument averaged 25 minutes, so we revised it and dropped questions to make it shorter.

For a second round of pretests in March 2001, the survey director and survey specialist visited three additional emergency food providers. Two providers housed both a pantry and an emergency kitchen, one in Plainfield, New Jersey, and the other in Staten Island, New York. The third provider in Somerset, New Jersey, only housed a food pantry. We interviewed a total of six kitchen clients in person and six pantry clients (four in person and two by telephone). The average administration time was 15 to 16 minutes. Following the second pretest, we made minor changes to question wording and order.

b. Instrument Content and Design

The instrument was divided into seven modules. Clients were interviewed about their:

1. Reasons for visiting the emergency kitchen or food pantry and frequency of use of emergency food assistance services
2. Degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the amount and variety of food
3. Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics
4. Household characteristics
5. Current and past participation in federal nutrition assistance and other benefit programs
6. Food security
7. Food stamp program eligibility and household income

2. Contacting Providers

Once we selected EFAS providers for the client survey phase, survey associates called them to verify that they were still operating as an EFAS facility, to confirm their location, to record the expected number of clients on a typical day, and to explain and engage their participation in the study. Providers selected for the client survey were contacted during July through November 2001.

A relational database (using Access) created for the project incorporated a tracking system for all emergency kitchens and pantries, provided a mechanism for scheduling site visits, and facilitated data entry of client selection form information. Facility directors' names, contact information, and frequency of meals service and hours of operation could be recorded or updated.

To ensure adequate telephone interviewing staff were available at the time of the visit, the survey associates used a calendar scheduler in the Access database. The scheduler indicated the number of telephone interviewers available each hour throughout the day. More telephone interviewers were required for emergency kitchens than the pantries to accommodate the expected client flow. (The results of contacting providers are summarized in Chapter II and shown in Table A.1 (Appendix A). Most providers received one visit, however some larger providers were visited up to three days. On average, 13 clients (range 2-52) were interviewed per selected provider**.**

We also developed information sheets that included responses for commonly asked questions for interviewers to use with EFAS facility staff and with respondents (see Exhibits B.1 and B.2). These sheets described the study's purpose, what types of questions would be asked, the length of time the interview would take, how the respondents were selected, and respondent confidentiality issues.

EXHIBIT B.1

Commonly Asked Questions
Agency Version

1. Who do you work for? or Who is doing this study?

I am working with Mathematica Policy Research, an independent policy research organization in Princeton, New Jersey. We have been contracted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct this study.

2. Why are you doing these interviews?

The study will help to provide an understanding of hunger in America. Food providers and clients across the country are doing the study to better understand the need for food assistance programs and to find out about the assistance available through programs such as this one.

3. How long will the client interview take?

The interview will take the clients about 15 minutes to complete. The clients will be given a card, and when finished with their meals (or picking up their food) they will go to an interviewer to do the interview.

4. How was this agency selected for the study?

Your agency was selected at random from agencies participating in the Emergency Food Assistance System Provider Survey. As we are unable to interview all the people that come to this program for food assistance on a given day, interviewers will pick people to interview by counting off so many people waiting in line (or sitting around the tables) to participate in the interview.

5. What types of questions will you ask?

Questions in the interview will deal with the clients' household structure (who lives with them), the food needs of their household, and their satisfaction with food assistance programs.

6. Will clients' answers affect the government assistance clients receive or their ability to come here for food?

No, everything said during the interview will be kept confidential. MPR will not share the information with anyone. The clients' responses will not be linked to their names or to a specific agency, and interviewers will not put the clients' name or any identifying information on the interview. The information that the clients tell interviewers will be combined with thousands of other people to assess the country's food assistance programs.

EXHIBIT B.2

Commonly Asked Questions
Client Version

1. Who do you work for? or Who is doing this study?

I am working with Mathematica Policy Research, an independent policy research organization in Princeton, New Jersey. We have been contracted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to conduct this study.

2. Why are you doing these interviews?

The study will help to provide an understanding of hunger in America. Food providers and clients across the country are doing the study to better understand the need for food assistance programs and to find out about the assistance available through programs such as this one.

3. How long will this interview take?

The interview will take about 15 minutes to complete. I will give you this card now. When you are done with your meal (or picking up your food) come over to where I am sitting and we can do the interview then.

4. How was I selected for the study?

It would be impossible to interview all the people that came to this program for food assistance today. There are too many people. So we picked people to interview by counting off so many people waiting in line (or sitting around the tables) to participate in the interview. You will be able to voice your opinions about programs such as this one by answering the interview questions.

5. What types of questions will you ask me?

Questions in the interview will deal with your household structure (who lives with you), the food needs of you and/or your family, and your satisfaction with food assistance programs.

6. Will my answers affect government assistance I receive or my ability to come here for food?

No, everything you tell me during the interview will be kept confidential. I will not share the information with anyone. Your responses will not be linked to your name and I will not put your full name or any identifying information on the interview. The information that you tell me will be combined with thousands of other people to assess the country's food assistance programs.

3. Sampling and Interviewing Clients

Mathematica employed experienced field interviewers to work in pairs when making scheduled visits to providers. Interviewers were responsible for selecting adult clients to interview and either arranging the CATI interview or conducting a hard-copy interview on site. The survey associates kept in contact with the field staff through weekly calls. The survey associates were responsible for contacting the sites, making the appointments, assuring field staff coverage for each site visit, and keeping track of the field interviewers respondent payments and productivity. Survey associates reported weekly field outcomes to the survey specialist who met with the survey director daily. MPR telephone interviewers were available during the scheduled call times but were also assigned to other projects to ensure that no down time was charged to the project. Data Operations supervisory staff, who also reported to the survey specialist, supervised.

a. Training

MPR staff hired and trained field interviews/enumerators at one of three regional trainings held across the United States during July and August 2001: Princeton, New Jersey; St. Louis, Missouri; and Los Angeles, California. The survey director, the survey specialist, and survey associates trained a total of 99 field interviewers at these three sessions.

Interviewers participated in a one-day training and received a training manual that covered the procedures they needed to follow to ensure the collection of high quality data. Among the issues covered: the study's objectives, sampling techniques for randomly selecting clients and completing the client selection form on site, techniques for gaining clients' cooperation, methods to connect selected clients with a trained interviewer at MPR's Data Operations Center in Princeton, New Jersey, question-by-question specifications for administering the hard-copy instrument, and guidelines for remuneration and record-keeping. Training materials included

examples of materials, scripts, and survey forms. The training emphasized the importance of implementing correct sampling procedures, recording accurate information about the number of clients served by the facility during the time the interviewers were on site, gaining the cooperation of the providers staff and clients, keeping track of respondent payments, being sure to get the respondent's signature and completing hard-copy interview forms, when necessary.

In addition to training the field interviewers/enumerators, several training sessions were conducted with telephone interviewers who worked daytime, evening, and weekend shifts. A total of 97 telephone interviewers were trained to use the CATI. About one-third of interviewers were bilingual in English and Spanish.

b. Field Period

Client interviews took place across the country during a 14-week field period from August 13 through November 17, 2001. The sites were divided into three cohorts, representing emergency kitchens and pantries in both rural and urban areas. Field staff were trained approximately two weeks apart, staggering the start dates of data collection. Data collection was evenly spread across the 14 weeks.

- Cohort 1 sites were mainly on the East Coast. The training took place in Princeton, New Jersey on August 5, 2001.

- Cohort 2 sites were mainly on the West Coast, but included Chicago, Illinois. This training took place in Los Angeles, California on August 19, 2001.

- Cohort 3 sites were located in the central part of the country. The training took place in St. Louis, Missouri on September 9, 2001.

c. Sampling Clients

Interviewers received a client selection form for each site. The form included all the site contact information, sampled date and time for data collection, expected number of clients, and

how the respondents would be selected. The respondents were randomly selected in a systematic procedure. The respondents were either lined up waiting to gain access to the facility or seated at tables. The field interviewer used two important numbers:

1. A "start with" number, to identify the first person in the line or at tables to be interviewed
2. A "take every" number to allow the selection of the next person to be interviewed. The number refers to the number of people to be counted to determine the next participant.

The "take every" number was determined by how many clients were expected for the meal/to visit pantry for the scheduled day to ensure the correct number of clients were selected to complete an interview. All respondents received a $10 incentive for their participation.

d. Mode of Interview

CATI Methodology. For this survey, we used cellular telephones and field personnel to interview adult clients at emergency kitchens and food pantries. Trained field staff/enumerators sampled clients and then dialed cellular telephones into MPR's data collection facilities, at which time a trained telephone interviewer conducted a CATI interview.

Field staff at each site had four cellular telephones for respondents' use. Optimally, the cell phones enabled four interviews to be conducted simultaneously and maintained the confidentiality of the respondent's answers. The majority of completed interviews were completed by telephones using CATI.

Hard-copy Instrument. When cellular telephones could not be used, the field staff completed interviews on-site using hard-copy questionnaires. One-fourth of emergency kitchen interviews (n=560, or 23 percent) and one-third of food pantry interviews (n=783, or 33 percent) were completed using hard-copy forms. This was primarily due to lack of cellular telephone coverage or telephone reception problems, but sometimes was used to accommodate respondents

who could not wait until one of the four cellular telephones was available or if many interviews needed to be conducted at the same time.

Several changes were made to the CATI version of the questionnaire to simplify the document for field use. In Section A, the respondent was asked about visiting the emergency kitchens and pantries in a specific time frame. A chart was added to assist the interviewer for the proper fills in the question, specifying the "weekday after day of interview." Response categories were added to Q.E12 to simplify the skip patterns depending on presence of women and/or children in the household. The questions regarding household members (Q.D6) and vehicles owned (Q.G6) were asked as a series of sequential questions in the CATI version. To ease administration of these questions on the hard copy, the format was changed to a grid with rows and columns for each household member/vehicle. Information was provided in Q.G1c for calculating the poverty level.

Field staff mailed completed hard-copy instruments to MPR, where the data were entered into the CATI program. A review of frequencies of responses to individual survey questions did not suggest any systematic biases or differences between the two modes.

e. Language of Interview

Both the CATI and hard-copy instruments were available in English and Spanish. However, the predominant language used to conduct interviews was English. Three percent of kitchen client interviews and 12 percent of pantry client interviews were conducted in Spanish. Four percent of both kitchen client and pantry client interviews required a translator at the site to conduct the interview in languages other than English or Spanish. In a site with Spanish-speaking respondents and English-speaking field interviewers, printed Spanish language cards explained the study, asked for participation, gave directions about the use of the telephone, and explained that respondents would be paid after completion.

f. Respondents' Understanding of Questions

A small proportion of time (2 percent) a proxy respondent was used when the sampled respondent was unable to answer the questions due to a physical or mental condition.[1] These conditions might include speech or hearing impairments or the physical limitations that would not permit the respondent to participate. Interviewers reported that more than 90 percent of respondents had a "good", "very good", or "excellent" understanding of the questions. Less than 2 percent of respondents were reported by interviewers to have a "poor" understanding of the survey questions. Interviewers reported that about 7 percent of respondents had some difficulty understanding the interview in either English or Spanish.

g. Nonrespondents

Overall client nonresponse was low. About 13 percent of pantry clients and 11 percent of kitchen clients refused the interview. Field interviewers noted a range of reasons that clients did not participate in the study. The following examples provide a flavor of the reasons:

- At a Texas pantry, Spanish translation cards were used,[2] and some respondents were leery or suspicious of the interviewing process and did not want to participate.
- At a Midwest pantry, respondents left due to heavy rain and not wanting to miss their ride.
- At a Midwest soup kitchen, the supper meal was distributed at a local park, and many people that were selected wandered off after the meal was served. There was no way to contain the respondents in the park area. Also, as it became dark, the respondents left the park for safety reasons before they could be interviewed.

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[1]An additional 1 to 2 percent of selected clients with physical or mental impairments had no proxy available and were unable to complete the interview themselves (see Table II.4).

[2]Spanish translation cards were used by English-speaking interviewers when there was no Spanish-speaking interviewer or translator on-site. The cards contained information that explained the study, provided directions about speaking to a Spanish-speaking interviewer on the telephone and getting payment for completing the interview, and thanked the respondent for their participation.

- At several soup kitchens, respondents had to go to work and could not stay to be interviewed.
- At several soup kitchens and pantries, respondents said they did not feel like waiting to be interviewed. Occasional problems with telephone disconnects also added to the wait and frustration of respondents, and some chose to leave before being interviewed.
- At some kitchens, several people finished eating at the same time and did not have time to wait for the next available telephone.
- In a few cases, no translator was available on site to conduct the interview.
- At one large provider in a metropolitan city, the third visit was cancelled on the day of the visit because security personnel at the soup kitchen discovered that clients had planned to rob the interviewers. This site had many single men and many of the clients were believed to be drug addicts.

4. Data File Preparation and Review

A number of survey data files were created for analysis. To calculate sampling and analysis weights and complete the response rate calculations, the project statistician requested assistance from the survey specialist in reviewing the client selection forms and updating the Access database. If there was a discrepancy between the number of expected clients reported by the site coordinator at the time of appointment setting and the count of clients reported by the interviewer on the day of data collection, MPR survey staff used a report from the relational database (in Access) to review the discrepancy and determine the correct number of clients. When necessary, staff referred to original hard-copy scheduling and client selection forms to resolve discrepancies.

APPENDIX C

ANALYTIC METHODS

This appendix provides descriptions of the analytic methods used to analyze the EFAS Client Survey data. The appendix includes four main sections: (1) a description of the sample weights used in the analysis; (2) a description of sample design effects and estimates of standard errors; (3) a description of the treatment of observations with missing data; and (4) the creation of additional variables for the analysis, including poverty and nutrition program eligibility indicators.

1. Description of Use of Sample Weights

The sample weights used with the data were derived from the weights of the 2000 EFAS Provider Survey (Ohls et al. 2001) with additional adjustments applied as described in Appendix A. In general, all of the statistics in this report were obtained using the sample weights to produce nationally representative estimates of kitchen and pantry clients in the United States.[1] However, unweighted tabulations were also performed in order to obtain sample sizes and compare the findings with those obtained using the sample weights.

2. Design Effects and Estimates of Standard Errors

Because the client survey had a clustered sample design, the true standard errors obtained for various estimates (such as means, and differences of means) will tend to be larger than the standard errors that would be obtained with a simple random sample. The clustering of observations within the primary sampling units (PSUs) included in the survey makes the sample observations more similar to each other than would be the case for a simple random sample. Design effects, equal to the ratio of the estimated variance of a statistic to its variance under the

[1]Because providers in Alaska and Hawaii were not included in the study, the client samples are representative of kitchen and pantry clients in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia only.

assumption of a simple random sample, varied considerably for the values generated in the report. The median design effect was 4, and fewer than 5 percent of the design effects were over 10.

The statistical software package Stata, Version 7.0, was used to estimate design effects and standard errors for every analysis in the report. Stata accounts for the clustering of observations within PSUs, but not for the stratification or second-stage sampling of the population, factors that probably have a much more modest effect on standard error estimates. Significance tests were performed using a linear regression model and the Bonferroni adjustment technique (Stata Corporation, pp. 95-101). Initial data preparation was performed using SAS, Version 8.0, while both SAS and Stata were used for data tabulation purposes.

3. Treatment of Observations with Missing Data

Item nonresponse was generally quite low for the EFAS Client Survey. Refusals were usually below 0.1 percent for any single item and reached a maximum of 1.2 percent only for a question regarding monthly income. The proportion of respondents indicating they did not know the answer to a particular question was usually below 1 percent and was never more than 5 percent except for questions related to monthly income (11 percent) and annual income (25 percent).

We addressed missing income data in several ways. A separate question on the survey asked clients whether their monthly income was at or below 130 percent of the poverty level (the gross income limit for participation in the Food Stamp Program). In addition, we inferred a household's low-income status from reported participation of household members in means-tested programs, such as cash welfare (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Social Security Income (SSI), or general assistance), food stamps, WIC, the National School Lunch Program, or the School Breakfast Program. Participation in welfare or food stamps was

assumed to imply income at or below 130 percent of the poverty level at some point during the past 12 months. Participation in the child nutrition programs was assumed to imply income at or below 185 percent of the poverty level at some point during the past 12 months. Taken together, responses to these questions allowed us to place boundaries on household income for most respondents in the survey, such that low-income status (being at or below 185 percent of the poverty level or at or below 130 percent of the poverty level) was known for 96.5 percent of the households in the survey sample.

In general, reported statistics are calculated only for the portion of the sample with nonmissing values of the variable(s) in question. For this reason, the sample sizes used in different tables of the report might not be identical, even when the same population (for example, kitchen clients) is being discussed. Forcing the sample size to be the same for all analyses would tend to reduce the precision of our estimates and would also risk biasing estimates inasmuch as observations with zero item nonresponse might be systematically different from observations with some item nonresponse.

4. Analytic Variables Created

We created numerous analytic variables in order to address research questions regarding EFAS clients. In general, these variables fell into four broad categories: (1) individual demographic characteristics, (2) household demographic characteristics, (3) food security measures, and (4) nutrition program eligibility variables.

Individual Characteristics. We created mutually exclusive categories for race/ethnicity based on respondents' answers to separate questions on Hispanic origin and race: non-Hispanic white, non-Hispanic black, Hispanic, and other. The 'other' category includes racial groups too small to report separately (Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander). Cases reporting Hispanic origin and unknown race were classified as Hispanic.

Household Characteristics. To minimize the interview time required to complete the household roster section of the questionnaire, specific household roster information[2] was collected for the respondent and up to five additional household members (up to six people total). Responses to Q.D5 "Including yourself, how many people live in your household?" were used to report household size. For households containing more than six individuals (six percent of pantry client households and 2 percent of kitchen client households), we asked whether there were additional members, and, if so, how many were children. If no answer was provided to Q.D5, we imputed household size using information on the respondent's marital status and the participation of household members in child nutrition programs.

Certain household characteristics were important for the analysis, but could not always be obtained directly from a single survey question. These included the number of children under age 18 in each household and the number of people age 60 or older in each household. Using the information provided in the roster of household members, and additional questions for households larger than six people, we created indicators for the number of children under age 18 and for the number of adults in the household. Respondents' children with unknown ages were coded as under age 18 if the respondent was age 45 or younger, and respondents' grandchildren with unknown ages were coded as under age 18 if the respondent was age 65 or younger. In addition, other household members with unknown ages were coded to be under age 18 if no other children were present in the household but the respondent indicated household members had participated in child nutrition programs. Using the household roster information, we also crated an indicator for the number of people age 60 or older in the household.

[2] Household roster information included the respondent's and household member's age, gender, and U.S. citizenship, and the household member's relationship to the respondent.

Food Security. Household food security was assessed using the six-item short form developed by Blumberg et al. (1999). The six-item short form is a subset of the 18-item standard or core set of questions used to track household food security for national health objectives (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2000; Bickel et al. 2000). The six-item form was used to classify households into one of three categories: (1) "food secure" (2) "food insecure without hunger" and (3) "food insecure with hunger."[3] Further information on using the short-form food security assessment can be found in USDA's *Guide to Measuring Household Food Security, Revised 2000* (Bickel et al. 2000).

The client survey also included a seventh question which is also part of the 18-item set (Q. F7: "In the past 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?" This question has been shown to be a useful indicator to distinguish the severity of food insecurity at the end of the scale associated with hunger (Bickel et al. 2000). Because the prevalence of hunger among EFAS clients was expected to be fairly high, we felt that there was value in asking and reporting the seventh question for this high-risk population.

Food Assistance Program Eligibility. In order to estimate what percentage of respondents' households were eligible for federal food assistance programs, we created indicators of apparent eligibility for seven programs[4]: (1) the Food Stamp Program (FSP), (2) the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), (3) the National School Lunch

[3] The 18-item standard instrument is used to further distinguish moderate and severe hunger within the category "food insecure with hunger".

[4] The survey attempted to find out about the direct receipt of government commodities through a question about The Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), but because of ambiguity in the question wording, the survey responses to this question are not reported.

Program (NSLP), (4) the School Breakfast Program (SBP), (5) the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), (6) food through a child care center or Head Start program, and (7) the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP), formerly the Nutrition Program for the Elderly (NPE).

Households were considered eligible for food stamps if they reported food stamp participation or if they appeared to be low-income, low-resource households. Low-income status was determined either by monthly or annual income at or below 130 percent of the poverty level (see Table C.1 for Fiscal Year 2002 poverty thresholds by household size), or by receipt of cash welfare by household members during the past year. Low-resource status was determined by cash and countable vehicular assets below the FSP thresholds ($3,000 if the household includes people age 60 or older, and $2,000 otherwise).

To determine countable vehicular assets, the survey asked clients about the make, model, and year of vehicles for households with more than one vehicle. Food stamp eligibility rules require that vehicles be assessed at their "fair market value," equal to the wholesale value of the vehicle in excess of $4,650. Using the Internet (http://www2.nadaguides.com/), we obtained retail and wholesale values for as many of the vehicles as possible. Where multiple values were offered for the same make, model, and year, we used the median value. Where the wholesale value was unknown but the retail value was known, we estimated the former as 0.8049944 times the latter. Where neither the wholesale or retail value was known, we imputed it as 0.6394145 times the reported value of the vehicle.[5]

[5]These coefficients were obtained from regressions of the wholesale value on either the retail or reported value of the vehicle. The regressions did not include a constant term because we did not want to assume that a vehicle with zero retail or reported value had a nonzero wholesale value.

A household was considered eligible for WIC if the respondent reported a member receiving WIC benefits during the past year or if the household had income at or below 185 percent of the poverty level and was categorically eligible for benefits. Categorical eligibility was defined as the presence of either a child age 5 or younger or a woman who is pregnant or nursing or who has given birth in the past six months.

A household was considered eligible for NSLP and SBP benefits if the respondent reported a member receiving either benefit during the past year or if the household had income at or below 185 percent of the poverty level and was categorically eligible for benefits. Categorical eligibility was defined as the presence of a child age 5 to 17 in the household or a child under the age of 18 whose precise age was not listed on the roster of household members.

A household was considered eligible for SFSP benefits if the respondent reported a member receiving summer food benefits during the past year or if the household included a child under the age of 18 whose precise age was not listed on the roster of household members.

A household was considered eligible for meals through a child care program or Head Start if the respondent reported the receipt of such benefits during the past year or if the household included a child age 12 or younger or a child under the age of 18 whose precise age was not listed on the roster of household members.

A household was considered eligible for the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (or Nutrition Program for the Elderly) if the respondent reported the receipt of such benefits during the past year or if the household included any member age 60 or older.

TABLE C.1

FY 2002 POVERTY THRESHOLDS, BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Household Size	Poverty Threshold
1 person	$ 716/month
2 people	$ 968/month
3 people	$1,220/month
4 people	$1,471/month
5 people	$1,723/month
6 people	$1,975/month
7 people	$2,226/month
8 people	$2,478/month
Each additional person	$ 252/month

NOTE: The FY 2002 monthly poverty thresholds used to determine poverty status are listed in Table C.1 (Federal Register, 3/21/2001, p. 15829).

APPENDIX D

DATA TABLES

TABLE D.1

SAMPLE SIZES OF INTERVIEWED CLIENTS

Characteristic	Emergency Kitchen Clients			Food Pantry Clients		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Age 18 – 29 years						
Non-Hispanic white	57	43	100	38	96	134
Non-Hispanic black	45	40	85	9	42	51
Hispanic	46	21	67	13	86	99
Other race/ethnicity	6	9	15	1	2	3
Unknown race/ethnicity	1	1	2	1	3	4
Total	155	114	269	62	229	291
Age 30 - 44 years						
Non-Hispanic white	160	100	260	83	227	310
Non-Hispanic black	392	188	580	97	167	264
Hispanic	62	42	104	53	182	235
Other race/ethnicity	30	11	41	15	20	35
Unknown race/ethnicity	4	4	8	3	4	7
Total	648	345	993	251	600	851
Age 45 – 59 years						
Non-Hispanic white	171	78	249	82	179	261
Non-Hispanic black	410	94	504	110	143	253
Hispanic	60	26	86	37	95	132
Other race/ethnicity	44	17	61	18	20	38
Unknown race/ethnicity	7	2	9	2	2	4
Total	692	217	909	249	439	688

TABLE D.1 (*continued*)

Characteristic	Emergency Kitchen Clients			Food Pantry Clients		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Age 60 years and older						
Non-Hispanic white	63	59	122	66	152	218
Non-Hispanic black	59	44	103	59	166	225
Hispanic	7	9	16	32	61	93
Other race/ethnicity	8	3	11	9	11	20
Unknown race/ethnicity	0	0	0	0	6	6
Total	137	115	252	166	396	562
TOTAL – ALL AGES						
Non-Hispanic white	451	280	731	269	656	925
Non-Hispanic black	906	367	1,273	275	518	793
Hispanic	175	98	273	137	425	562
Other race/ethnicity	88	40	128	43	53	96
Unknown race/ethnicity	12	7	20[a]	6	15	21
Total[b]	**1,632**	**792**	**2,425**	**730**	**1,667**	**2,397**

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance Study Client Survey (2001).

[a]Includes one case with missing gender.
[b]Includes up to seven cases with missing age and one case with missing gender.

TABLE D.2

SOCIOECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS
OF ADULT FOOD PANTRY RESPONDENTS

	Percent	(SE)
Age		
18 to 29 years	12.4	1.67
30 to 44 years	34.0	2.02
45 to 59 years	30.2	1.74
60 years and older	23.4	2.25
Gender		
Male	28.8	1.72
Female	71.2	1.72
Race/Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic white	48.6	6.91
Non-Hispanic black	30.5	5.46
Hispanic	16.2	3.39
Other	4.6	0.86
Marital Status		
Married	26.3	2.35
Living as married	6.3	1.08
Widowed	12.0	1.56
Divorced/separated	30.9	1.70
Never married	24.5	2.31
Educational Attainment		
Less than 8th grade	12.9	1.69
Completed 8th grade	8.5	1.02
Some high school	24.5	2.29
Graduated from high school	28.7	1.88
GED[a]	5.3	1.06
Trade school	1.2	0.34
Some college	16.4	2.88
Graduated from college	2.0	0.37
Post-graduate education	0.5	0.25
Self-Reported Health Status		
Excellent	9.0	1.02
Very good	12.2	1.13
Good	24.2	1.63
Fair	33.7	1.73
Poor	20.9	2.08
Citizenship		
U.S.	93.4	1.81
Non-U.S.	6.6	1.81
SAMPLE SIZE	2,397	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]The number of respondents obtaining a GED may be underestimated due to persons reporting "graduated from high school," regardless of whether a GED or high school diploma was obtained.

TABLE D.3

EMPLOYMENT-RELATED CHARACTERISTICS OF
ADULT FOOD PANTRY RESPONDENTS

	Percent	(SE)
Employment Status		
Employed	14.4	1.85
Unemployed	24.0	2.46
Not in labor force		
Not looking for work	5.8	0.70
In a job training program	1.1	0.30
Disabled/unable to work	36.8	2.97
Retired	9.7	1.53
Homemaker	6.8	1.53
Student	1.4	0.48
Number of Hours Worked Per Week by Workers (mean) (n = 344)	29.7	1.21
Number of Hours Worked Per Week by Workers (n = 344)		
1 – 9	6.9	1.95
10 – 19	10.3	4.06
20 – 39	52.6	3.43
40 or more	30.1	5.21
Length of Unemployment/Time Spent Looking for Work (n = 723)		
Less than a month	21.5	4.20
1 to 3 months	34.7	1.62
4 to 6 months	18.2	1.62
7 to 11 months	3.6	0.93
12 to 23 months	5.9	1.28
24 months or more	16.1	2.49
SAMPLE SIZE	2,390	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE D.4

INDICATORS OF FOOD INSECURITY AND HUNGER
AMONG FOOD PANTRY CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS
(Percentages)

Food Security Question	All Households	(SE)	Household Size: 1 Person	(SE)	2-4 Persons	(SE)	5 or More Persons	(SE)
"The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that *often* true, *sometimes* true, or *never* true for you and your household in the last 12 months?								
Often true	38.5	2.15	37.9	3.39	39.2	3.22	37.5	4.58
Sometimes true	47.3	1.52	44.9	3.52	47.7	3.18	50.0	4.93
Never True	14.2	1.62	17.2	3.40	13.1	1.65	12.5	2.86
"(I/We) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that *often* true, *sometimes* true, or *never* true for you and your household in the last 12 months?								
Often true	25.2	1.88	29.3	3.31	23.6	2.40	23.0	2.07
Sometimes true	47.1	1.45	46.9	1.82	46.2	2.37	50.3	3.58
Never True	27.7	2.11	23.8	2.88	30.2	2.17	26.7	3.68

TABLE D.4 (*continued*)

Food Security Question	All Households	(SE)	Household Size: 1 Person	(SE)	2-4 Persons	(SE)	5 or More Persons	(SE)
In the last 12 months, since last [CURRENT MONTH], did you or other adults in your household ever cut the size of (your/their) meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?								
Yes	54.5	2.11	61.4	2.93	50.6	2.48	55.3	3.09
No	45.5	2.11	38.6	2.93	49.4	2.48	44.7	3.09
How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months? (n = 1,309)								
Almost every month	41.1	2.01	48.3	4.84	37.1	2.27	38.7	3.29
Some months but not every month	38.4	1.89	36.3	4.23	41.7	2.96	32.4	4.54
Only one or two months	20.5	1.41	15.4	2.29	21.1	2.71	29.0	4.26
In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?								
Yes	60.4	2.40	64.3	3.51	58.3	2.74	60.4	3.19
No	39.6	2.40	35.7	3.51	41.7	2.74	39.6	3.19

TABLE D.4 (*continued*)

Food Security Question	All Households	(SE)	Household Size: 1 Person	(SE)	2-4 Persons	(SE)	5 or More Persons	(SE)
In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food?								
Yes	40.3	2.47	44.9	4.02	37.0	2.43	42.8	4.86
No	59.7	2.47	55.1	4.02	63.0	2.43	57.2	4.86
In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?								
Yes	26.0	1.91	32.5	3.45	22.6	1.91	25.3	2.85
No	74.0	1.91	67.5	3.45	77.4	1.91	74.7	2.85
SAMPLE SIZE	2,363		688		1,217		458	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE D.5

PANTRY CLIENTS' SATISFACTION WITH EFAS PROVIDER'S FOOD

Race/ethnicity	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
AMOUNT OF FOOD								
Male								
Non-Hispanic white	68.3	6.29	28.3	5.72	2.5	1.86	0.9	0.65
Non-Hispanic black	61.2	7.50	31.1	7.23	4.1	1.89	3.6	1.09
Hispanic	61.3	9.77	26.6	7.91	11.5	5.38	0.6	0.41
Other[a]	52.1	12.01	31.9	10.82	13.8	6.58	2.2	2.16
All Males[b] (n = 699)	63.7	3.94	29.6	3.60	4.9	1.30	1.9	0.69
Female								
Non-Hispanic white	73.7	3.61	22.3	3.12	2.2	0.93	1.7	0.85
Non-Hispanic black	69.0	2.88	29.2	2.68	1.8	0.63	0.0	0.05
Hispanic	64.8	5.34	29.5	5.38	2.8	1.15	2.9	2.08
Other[a]	71.3	7.69	25.1	6.18	1.9	1.80	1.6	1.72
All Females[b] (n = 1,597)	70.8	2.35	25.6	2.19	2.2	0.54	1.5	0.56
VARIETY OF FOOD								
Male								
Non-Hispanic white	59.9	6.85	33.6	5.71	6.1	3.90	0.4	0.38
Non-Hispanic black	65.9	5.96	27.2	5.54	4.8	1.71	2.1	1.32
Hispanic	59.1	9.18	29.4	7.73	11.0	5.41	0.5	0.41
Other[a]	45.5	11.67	43.0	10.22	8.1	4.96	3.4	2.50
All Males[b] (n = 703)	61.4	3.90	30.9	3.52	6.4	1.89	1.2	0.53
Female								
Non-Hispanic white	68.2	3.34	25.6	2.48	4.1	1.12	2.0	0.76
Non-Hispanic black	65.4	3.89	30.4	3.70	3.4	1.09	0.8	0.68
Hispanic	64.1	4.92	28.0	4.15	4.1	1.46	3.7	2.38
Other[a]	61.6	10.98	29.6	9.66	5.0	2.38	3.9	4.02
All Females[b] (n = 1,614)	66.5	2.38	27.5	2.11	3.9	0.75	2.1	0.57

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a] The "other" race/ethnic group includes Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, as well as those individuals that classify themselves as multiracial.

[b] Includes those individuals for which race/ethnicity was unknown.

TABLE D.6

PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS BY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF FOOD PANTRY CLIENTS
(Percentages, Unless Otherwise Stated)

	Users Who Visit Food Pantry:			
	1 Time per Week		2-5 Times per Week	
	Value	(SE)	Value	(SE)
Received food stamps in the last 12 months	48.5	4.41	41.4	7.99
Currently receive food stamps	80.5	4.50	78.8	5.52
Mean value of Food Stamps received by those who currently receive food stamps (in dollars)	140	9.1	122	20.7
Received food from the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) in the last 12 months	13.2	1.01	10.2	1.50
Received food via a child care program such as Head Start in the last 12 months	4.3	1.19	2.6	1.48
Received Free or Reduced-Price School Breakfasts in the last 12 months	28.3	2.26	23.6	3.55
Received Free or Reduced-Price School Lunches in the last 12 months	32.8	2.23	26.0	3.10
Received meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in the last 12 months	8.0	1.03	15.1	2.52
Received food from Meals-on-Wheels or a Senior Meals Program in the last 12 months	3.8	0.67	8.7	1.81
Sample Size	2,096		299	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE D.7

INDICATORS OF FOOD INSECURITY AND HUNGER
AMONG EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENT HOUSEHOLDS
(Percentages)

Food Security Question	All Households	(SE)	Household Size: 1 Person	(SE)	2-4 Persons	(SE)	5 or More Persons	(SE)
"The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that *often* true, *sometimes* true, or *never* true for you and your household in the last 12 months?								
Often true	34.0	2.14	38.0	3.34	28.8	2.70	32.2	4.40
Sometimes true	41.5	1.91	40.6	3.12	40.2	2.78	52.4	4.82
Never True	24.5	2.30	21.4	3.15	31.1	3.65	15.3	3.80
"(I/We) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that *often* true, *sometimes* true, or *never* true for you and your household in the last 12 months?								
Often true	29.1	2.40	35.6	2.99	21.2	2.87	22.5	6.11
Sometimes true	38.9	2.82	35.3	3.17	42.7	4.10	45.5	4.99
Never True	32.0	3.12	29.1	3.90	36.1	4.40	31.9	5.25

TABLE D.7 (*continued*)

Food Security Question	All Households	(SE)	Household Size: 1 Person	(SE)	2-4 Persons	(SE)	5 or More Persons	(SE)
In the last 12 months, since last [CURRENT MONTH], did you or other adults in your household ever cut the size of (your/their) meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?								
Yes	58.2	3.10	61.5	4.47	52.6	3.65	60.9	5.61
No	41.8	3.10	38.5	4.47	47.4	3.65	39.1	5.61
How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months? (n = 1,575)								
Almost every month	49.0	3.14	54.6	3.98	42.7	5.66	37.8	9.00
Some months but not every month	29.0	2.67	25.4	3.56	31.6	4.52	41.7	6.94
Only one or two months	21.9	2.40	20.0	3.18	25.7	4.52	20.5	5.85
In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?								
Yes	61.3	2.87	63.9	3.71	56.0	4.38	67.8	5.07
No	38.7	2.87	36.1	3.71	44.0	4.38	32.2	5.07

TABLE D.7 (*continued*)

Food Security Question	All Households	(SE)	Household Size: 1 Person	(SE)	2-4 Persons	(SE)	5 or More Persons	(SE)
In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food?								
Yes	53.0	3.28	55.9	3.79	50.1	4.54	46.7	4.70
No	47.0	3.28	44.1	3.79	49.9	4.54	53.3	4.70
In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?								
Yes	41.2	3.22	46.5	4.05	36.4	4.73	28.5	6.48
No	58.8	3.22	53.5	4.05	63.6	4.73	71.5	6.48
SAMPLE SIZE	2,393		1,391		797		205	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE D.8

KITCHEN CLIENTS' SATISFACTION WITH EFAS PROVIDER'S FOOD

Race/ethnicity	Very Satisfied		Somewhat Satisfied		Somewhat Dissatisfied		Very Dissatisfied	
	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)	Percent	(SE)
AMOUNT OF FOOD								
Male								
Non-Hispanic white	70.0	3.84	23.1	3.89	6.0	2.10	0.8	0.42
Non-Hispanic black	46.4	4.69	41.9	4.61	8.0	2.26	3.7	1.18
Hispanic	83.5	4.48	11.6	3.18	3.4	1.64	1.5	1.34
Other[a]	64.5	7.11	27.8	6.78	4.2	2.89	3.4	2.77
All Males[b] (n = 1,616)	60.0	3.29	31.1	3.04	6.4	1.12	2.5	0.75
Female								
Non-Hispanic white	82.2	3.43	13.5	2.43	1.9	0.81	2.4	2.12
Non-Hispanic black	63.5	6.13	29.3	4.50	5.7	2.82	1.5	1.02
Hispanic	53.6	12.51	28.8	8.77	16.7	10.18	0.9	0.90
Other[a]	70.2	11.77	24.5	10.31	3.5	2.76	1.9	1.99
All Females[b] (n = 783)	70.2	4.51	22.2	2.52	5.8	3.04	1.8	0.93
VARIETY OF FOOD								
Male								
Non-Hispanic white	63.7	3.94	30.5	3.31	4.1	1.20	1.7	0.89
Non-Hispanic black	41.4	3.34	44.1	3.95	9.7	3.20	4.8	1.36
Hispanic	78.7	5.19	16.7	3.62	4.5	2.68	0.1	0.10
Other[a]	63.7	6.55	28.8	6.72	3.8	2.04	3.7	2.81
All Males[b] (n = 1,616)	55.1	3.07	35.0	3.05	6.8	1.58	3.1	0.86
Female								
Non-Hispanic white	69.3	4.93	24.5	4.43	2.9	1.11	3.2	2.20
Non-Hispanic black	56.4	6.73	34.6	5.19	4.5	2.37	4.6	2.05
Hispanic	63.5	12.67	20.9	6.22	15.6	10.48	0.1	0.06
Other[a]	66.9	13.41	23.1	11.06	3.9	2.98	6.1	4.09
All Females[b] (n = 787)	63.6	4.48	27.5	2.82	5.3	2.61	3.6	1.25

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

[a]The "other" race/ethnic group includes Native Americans, Alaskan Natives, Asians, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, as well as those individuals that classify themselves as multiracial.

[b] Includes those individuals for which race/ethnicity was unknown.

TABLE D.9

PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS BY HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS OF EMERGENCY KITCHEN CLIENTS
(Percentages, Unless Otherwise Stated)

	Users Who Visit Kitchens:					
	1 Time per Week		2-5 Times per Week		6-7 Times per Week	
	Value	(SE)	Value	(SE)	Value	(SE)
Received food stamps in the last 12 months	31.2	4.48	37.3	3.08	45.4	4.26
Currently receive food stamps	65.5	7.41	71.0	4.09	70.8	4.48
Mean value of food stamps received by those who currently receive food stamps (in dollars)	110	19.5	151	12.9	124	12.9
Received food from WIC in the last 12 months	6.7	2.12	5.9	1.28	2.9	1.16
Received food via a child care program such as Head Start in the last 12 months	1.3	0.64	2.5	1.08	2.0	1.30
Received free or reduced-price school breakfasts in the last 12 months	11.0	2.73	9.9	1.79	7.4	2.04
Received free or reduced-price school lunches in the last 12 months	12.2	2.73	11.6	1.86	8.0	2.13
Received meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in the last 12 months	5.5	2.01	4.2	1.05	5.5	1.89
Received food from Meals-on-Wheels or a Senior Meals Program in the last 12 months	6.0	2.35	3.2	0.88	3.8	1.33
Sample Size	471		1,149		797	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

TABLE D.10

AGE, GENDER, AND CITIZENSHIP COMPOSITION
(All Members of Household)

	All Members of Household, Pantry (%)	(SE)	All Members of Household, Kitchen (%)	(SE)
Age				
0 to 5	8.7	0.73	6.2	0.99
6 to 17	24.9	1.04	14.1	2.06
18 to 29	14.2	0.86	15.1	2.70
30 to 44	21.8	0.69	28.2	1.91
45 to 59	16.7	0.87	25.8	1.95
60 and over	13.7	1.62	10.5	1.47
SAMPLE SIZE	**6,661**		**4,585**	
Gender				
Male	46.7	0.91	56.2	2.10
Female	53.3	0.91	43.8	2.10
SAMPLE SIZE	**6,724**		**4,660**	
U.S. Citizen				
Yes	92.9	1.90	94.5	1.64
No	7.1	1.90	5.5	1.64
SAMPLE SIZE	**6,697**		**4,647**	

SOURCE: National Emergency Food Assistance System Client Survey (2001).

NOTE: Data available for at most six members of household. Six percent of pantry households and two percent of kitchen households contained more than six members.